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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our shelter in the time of storms, we thank You for this land we love. We are grateful for its history, government, discoveries, knowledge, creativity, and vision. As our lawmakers seek to keep our Nation strong, may they act and speak in ways that make us proud to be Americans. Use our Senators to banish hate and bigotry, inspiring our citizens to live together in peace. May the words of our legislators' mouths and the meditations of their hearts receive Your approval.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, I ask permission to speak in morning business for 1 minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement will be a very big boon to the

American worker. In my State, one out of every four American manufacturing firms export to Canada and Mexico. Seventy percent of these are very small or medium-sized businesses. More than 25,400 Iowans depend on manufacturing jobs.

By encouraging auto manufacturers to use more U.S. content in our cars and high-wage labor, the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement will help American workers compete on a level playing field and benefit from selling to two of our largest trading partners.

IOWA

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, on another matter, at the website ThisIsIowa.com, you can view a video of people visiting a fake real estate office in New York advertising modern, spacious properties. You can see the astonishment, then, on the faces of New Yorkers as they are shown beautiful, modern apartments, as well as homes near art museums and award-winning restaurants.

The prices and the neighborhood amenities seem too good to believe. The details are real and so are the job opportunities real. Only the location is not New York. The location is Iowa. Check it out on ThisIsIowa.com.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

BUDGET AGREEMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, earlier this week the Trump administration and Speaker PELOSI reached an agreement to avoid a government funding crisis and provide for our Armed Forces. In the tough circumstances of divided government, they achieved the kind of deal that our national defense

actually needs. The 2-year funding agreement will secure the resources we need to continue restoring the readiness of our Armed Forces and modernizing them to meet the 21st-century challenges that face our country.

As I mentioned yesterday, I always find it curious when our Democratic colleagues take the negotiating position that funding critical Pentagon missions and providing for the common defense are partisan Republican priorities. They act like only Republicans want a modern, ready military, such that our spending on national defense needs to be matched up with other spending in order to make it palatable to Democrats.

In one sense, my Republican colleagues and I will probably say, "guilty as charged." Yes, we absolutely prioritize the national defense and the U.S. military. Yes, we prioritize keeping Americans safe. This is the fundamental obligation of the U.S. government.

Over the past 2½ years, it has been a Republican President who has sought to reverse the previous 8 years of decline in defense. It has been Republicans in Congress who prioritized rebuilding our national defense after the Obama administration's neglect and atrophy. Thanks to the Trump administration's tough negotiating, this deal will secure a larger increase in defense funding than in nondefense programs relative to current law. Better than parity for defense.

I doubt Members need any reminding about why these investments are so critical, but if they do, every day's newspapers make the case loud and clear. For years, our adversaries have methodically stepped up their incursions and their aggressions. They want to chip away at the peaceful, rules-based international order that American leadership has helped to establish and preserve.

Between 2009 and 2018, the Chinese Communist Party increased its military spending—listen to this—by 83

• This "buller" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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percent—83 percent. Talk about a buildup. The Chinese nearly doubled their military spending in less than a decade. This is just the PRC's publicly acknowledged funding.

These numbers have very real implications. When China gets a leg up in terms of readiness or technology, they are able to hold a greater number of U.S. and allied forces at risk. They are able to push their air and maritime control further into the Indo-Pacific region, increasing hegemonic control and effectively pushing the United States and our allies back.

So the importance of this funding agreement is not simply our ability to provide for the upkeep and regular maintenance on our military as it currently exists. We are also talking about building the U.S. military of the future—research, development, and modernization—so that our Nation and our servicemembers are equipped to keep Americans safe and project power as necessary for years and decades to come.

In my view, this grave responsibility should be a top, top priority on both sides of the aisle, and this funding agreement will allow us to get it done. I am proud that it will meet the pressing needs of servicemembers stationed at installations around the country, like Ft. Campbell, Ft. Knox, and the Blue Grass Army Depot in Kentucky. The deal will secure sorely needed investment in the national defense, and it contains none of the far-left poison pills that House Democrats had sought, like going backward on the issue of life or stripping away rightful Presidential authorities. In divided government, that is what we call a good deal. The Senate will vote on it before the end of next week.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, first, the Senate will confirm several more impressive nominations. We are currently considering Stephen Dickson, of Georgia, to lead the Federal Aviation Administration. After him, we will turn our attention to two district court nominees. Wendy Williams Berger is the President's choice for the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida. She is a two-time graduate of Florida State University, with nearly three decades of courtroom experience, half of which has come on the bench.

Brian Buescher has been tapped for a vacancy in the District of Nebraska, where he has spent nearly two decades practicing law. Throughout his career, he has gained expertise in a wide array of legal areas and has earned admiration within the Nebraska legal community and beyond.

Those who know Mr. Buescher praise his "intelligence, integrity, professionalism, attentiveness, [and] character." The mayor of Omaha, where he has spent his entire legal career said: "Mr. Buescher would be an impartial

judge capable of setting aside personal opinion."

Despite his objective qualifications and all this praise, our Senate Democratic colleagues were not satisfied. Here was the bombshell that offended some of our colleagues with respect to this nominee. Listen to this. The nominee is a practicing Catholic.

My goodness, imagine that—in the United States of America, a person of faith, serving in government. Really?

In particular, some of our Democratic colleagues raked him over the coals in committee for his membership in the Knights of Columbus. It is shocking that a nominee for Federal district court would be a member of the Knights of Columbus.

Of course, we all know the Knights—a noted worldwide "extremist sect" of Catholics, which is about 2 million men strong, known among other things for their love of their Catholic faith, their unparalleled commitment to charitable work, and for hosting barbecues and pancake breakfasts.

Outrageous. I can't believe I need to repeat it in the U.S. Capitol, but there is nothing about living out one's faith that is disqualifying for public service—nothing. To the contrary, what the Constitution does forbid is imposing any kind of religious test for public office.

It is the Democrats' opposition to this nominee's faith, not his faith itself, that rubs against the grain of our Constitution. Fortunately, this tactic didn't fly. Our colleagues on the Judiciary Committee saw this tactic for what it is and voted to report Mr. Buescher favorably to the floor. I will be proud to vote to confirm him later today.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, the epidemic of opioid and substance abuse has wreaked havoc throughout our country. More than 2 million Americans suffer from opioid addiction. For years, the situation only seemed to get worse and worse. Unfortunately, my home State of Kentucky saw the pain firsthand. We are among the hardest hit States by this crisis.

Last week, both Kentucky and the entire Nation received a glimmer of long-awaited good news. Preliminary figures from the National Center for Health Statistics show that last year, 2018, saw the first—the first—nationwide decline in drug overdose deaths since 1990. For 28 straight years, overdose deaths climbed. But in 2018, that tragic number finally dropped. It was approximately a 5-percent decline nationwide.

In Kentucky, the Bluegrass State saw overdose deaths fall by nearly 15 percent last year, the largest drop in our State in more than a decade. After years of working and waiting, we are finally seeing progress in the fight to save lives. These numbers didn't hap-

pen on their own. Our comprehensive response involves countless law enforcement officers, medical professionals, educators, community leaders, and family members and friends of those affected.

I am proud of that. Several times in recent years, this Senate has done our part to bolster this fight with sweeping—sweeping—bipartisan action. We passed wide-ranging legislation to backstop the work on the frontlines with new programs, new funding for research, and new Federal resources for the communities most in need.

Just last year, we passed another landmark bill to attack the crisis of abuse from every single angle. Among its many features, the legislation makes it harder to traffic illegal drugs across the border; it supports mothers and babies struggling with opioid withdrawal; and it even includes one of my provisions to help those in recovery find a good job and stable housing as they work toward long-term recovery.

I am particularly proud of Kentucky's own role in leading in this recovery. Researchers at the University of Kentucky received the largest Federal grant in the school's history to fight opioid abuse all across our State. I was pleased to help them secure these resources as they aim to achieve a 40-percent reduction of opioid overdose deaths in 3 years.

In my hometown of Louisville, a private sector research facility received FDA approval for a medicine to ease withdrawal symptoms. I have worked to secure the inclusion of more Kentucky counties under the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Program and increase coordination among local, State, and Federal law enforcement on drug interdiction.

This tireless work by Kentuckians has helped write the headlines we are celebrating today, but, of course, there is still much more to do. We know this is not the end of the battle against addiction—not even close—but it is encouraging to see the reduction in overdose deaths across the country.

As majority leader, I will continue to fight to ensure Kentucky and the Nation have the resources to build on this progress, prevent and treat addiction, and ultimately save lives.

ISRAEL

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on one final matter, yesterday, the Democratic House of Representatives took a small step—small—to denounce the scourge of anti-Semitism. They passed a symbolic resolution opposing efforts to delegitimize the State of Israel and condemn the BDS movement.

It is too bad all of this, of all things, couldn't have been a unanimous vote. It is too bad that 16 Democrats voted against condemning BDS. Sixteen Democrats voted against condemning BDS over in the House yesterday.

It is regrettable that some of the Democrats who claim to represent the

future of their party lobbied against the measure that should be completely without controversy.

Even more broadly, I am sorry the bipartisan Senate-passed bill that would actually do something about BDS—in other words, action, not mere rhetoric—is still languishing over in the House without a vote, bipartisan legislation that passed with the support of 77 Senators, including my friend the Democratic leader—77 votes in the Senate, thoroughly bipartisan, but the Democratic House has found a way to fumble the ball.

Several months back, it took days of throat-clearing and a whole lot of watering down before they could even halfway condemn anti-Semitic remarks by one of their own Members. Now this symbolic BDS resolution is held up as a major victory, while Senate-passed legislation that would actually take action—actually do something against BDS—doesn't even get a vote. They will not even give it a vote over there in the House.

House Republicans have called for a vote on S. 1 over and over and over again, but the Speaker of the House doesn't seem interested.

I understand that picking fights with the President seems to be a higher priority across the Capitol than joining with the Senate to get bipartisan legislation actually made into law, but surely taking action to combat anti-Semitic efforts to delegitimize Israel shouldn't be too much to ask.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Stephen M. Dickson, of Georgia, to be Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration for the term of five years.

TAX REFORM

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, last week, Senator CARDIN and I introduced our S Corporation Modernization Act. That brings the total of tax reform bills I have introduced so far this year to six.

Obviously, 2017 was a banner year for tax reform. In December of 2017, we passed the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, a historic, comprehensive reform of our Tax Code that put more money in American families' pockets and helped spur growth at American businesses.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has been a great success for our economy and for hard-working Americans, but there are still things we can do to strengthen our Tax Code even further.

As I mentioned, last week, Senator CARDIN and I introduced our S Corporation Modernization Act. S corporations are the most common formal business structure in the United States. There are nearly 5 million of these businesses throughout the United States, including large numbers in rural America. Despite the popularity of S corporations, however, there have been few S corporation-related changes to the Tax Code since this business structure was created.

There are things we can do to make it easier for these businesses to operate and raise capital. That is why Senator CARDIN and I developed the S Corporation Modernization Act. Our legislation makes pro-growth reforms that will make it easier for these businesses to grow and create new jobs and opportunities in their communities.

Change is a human constant, but with modern technology, the pace of change has seemed to accelerate. American workers and American businesses face very different situations than they did even a decade ago. It is important that our Tax Code keeps pace with the 21st century economy.

In February, I reintroduced my Mobile Workforce State Income Tax Simplification Act along with Senator SHERROD BROWN. Today substantial numbers of workers travel to different States for temporary work assignments on a regular basis, and they end up subject to a bewildering variety of State laws governing State income tax.

Senator BROWN's and my legislation would create an across-the-board standard for mobile employees who spend a short period of time working across State lines. It would ensure that States receive fair tax payments while substantially simplifying tax requirements for employees and employers.

In March, I introduced two other bills focused on updating the Tax Code for the 21st century economy. The last decade or so has seen the rise of the gig economy—services provided by individuals through apps and websites like Uber, Lyft, TaskRabbit, Postmates, Grubhub, and many others. These arrangements have stretched the boundaries of current tax law.

My New Economy Works to Guarantee Independence and Growth Act, or the NEW GIG Act, as we call it, updates our tax law to provide clear guidance on the classification of this new generation of workers. It will ensure that Uber drivers, Postmates, Taskers, and others are treated as independent contractors for purposes of tax law if

they meet a set of objective criteria. The certainty my bill provides will benefit not only these workers but also traditional independent contractors like freelance writers and delivery drivers.

I also introduced the Digital Goods and Services Tax Fairness Act in March with Senator WYDEN. Our legislation is designed to prevent consumers from being faced with multiple taxes for downloading digital products.

For example, right now, a digital purchase of a television series could hypothetically be taxed in up to three States, depending on the circumstances of the purchase. The Digital Goods and Services Tax Fairness Act would provide rules of the road for taxing digital goods and services and ensure that digital purchases could only be taxed in one State—the State in which the consumer resides.

It would also prohibit States and local governments from taxing digital goods at higher rates than tangible goods. In other words, under our bill, that season of "The Office" that you want to buy digitally shouldn't be taxed at a higher rate than if you were purchasing the season on DVD.

We have a proud history of charitable giving in this country. Americans care about a lot of worthy causes and are committed to helping those in need. That is why I have routinely introduced amendments to the Tax Code to make charitable giving easier, several of which have been signed into law.

This year, I again introduced the Charities Helping Americans Regularly Throughout the Year Act, or CHARITY Act, with Senator CASEY. This year's version of our bill builds on some of the provisions we succeeded in getting passed over the past few years and will continue to help make it easier for Americans to give—and charities to receive—money.

Finally, this year I once again introduced legislation to repeal the punitive double—or triple—taxation known as the death tax. I have worked a lot on the death tax issue over the years because of the way it affects family farms and ranches. The death tax can make it difficult or impossible to hand off the family farm or ranch to the next generation.

While we gave farmers and ranchers substantial relief from the death tax in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, that relief is only guaranteed for 6½ more years, which is why I am committed to passing a permanent death tax repeal.

I am proud of the progress we have made for American businesses and American families with the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and I will continue working on these bills and others to further refine the Tax Code to spur economic growth and to address the realities of the 21st century economy.

TRIBUTE TO LYNN TJEERDSMA

Madam President, before I close, I would like to take a couple of minutes to recognize a staffer of mine who will be retiring at the end of this work period.

Lynn Tjeerdsma first came to work for me in 2007 to help out on the 2008 farm bill. After the bill passed, he headed back to the Farm Service Agency at the U.S. Department of Agriculture to serve as Assistant Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs, but I asked him back in 2011 to work with me on the 2012—which actually ended up being the 2014—farm bill, and he has been with me ever since.

I suppose it is possible that there is someone out there who knows the ins and outs of farm policy better than Lynn, but I have yet to meet that person.

After working with Lynn in 2007 and 2008, I asked him back for the 2012 farm bill because I wanted the best for South Dakota's farmers and ranchers, and Lynn is the best. There is a reason for that.

Lynn has an impressive farm policy résumé on both the administrative and the legislative side. In addition to working for me, he worked for Senator Larry Pressler on the 1990 farm bill, and he has extensive experience in the executive branch of our government.

He worked for the Farm Service Agency at the Department of Agriculture for years as a county executive director in Moody, SD; as a county executive director in Cass County, NB; as a program specialist and later a branch chief; and then, as I mentioned, as Assistant Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs. He also worked for the non-profit Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership.

As impressive as his farm policy résumé is, that is not all Lynn has brought to the table. Lynn often says: "The best ideas for a farm bill come from a farm, not from behind a desk in Washington, DC."

Lynn isn't just an agricultural policy expert; Lynn is a farmer—not was a farmer—although he farmed a large spread for 15 years before going to work for the Department of Agriculture—but is a farmer. Lynn still owns and operates a corn and soybean farm near Platte, SD. So he has a deep insight into the challenges facing farmers and ranchers and how we can meet their needs here in Washington, DC.

I have talked a lot about Lynn's agricultural expertise. I have relied on it for almost a decade. South Dakota's farmers and ranchers are better off today because of the knowledge and insight Lynn has brought to the table. I also want to talk about Lynn personally.

Every one of us in the Senate wants smart and knowledgeable staffers, but in an ideal world, our staffers aren't just smart and knowledgeable; they also have the kind of character that Lynn displays—dedicated, hard-working, cheerful, generous, humble, and unfailingly kind.

He is the kind of public servant we all aim to be and a gentleman in the very truest sense of the word.

I am not the only one who is going to miss Lynn. Every one of my staffers is

going to miss him as well. He has been a mentor to many in the office, and, perhaps more importantly, he has been supplying the staff with doughnuts every Friday for years.

After a tough week, everyone looked forward to Lynn's Friday morning email letting them know the Krispy Kremes were in the office. The doughnut notification email always included a list of things Lynn was thankful for that week, whether it was the weather or the fact that South Dakota farmers had gotten all their soybeans in the ground.

Lynn and his wife Mary were generous hosts, as well, inviting staffers over for Easter egg hunts and cook-outs. We will miss other distinctly Lynn things, too, like his impressive cowboy boot collection or how we had to prevent him from biking home in a torrential downpour. Lynn has logged more than 5,000 miles on his bike while working for me, traveling from his home in Alexandria to the Dirksen Building on a daily basis.

And, of course, everyone will miss Lynn's stories—like the one about the day that a younger Lynn tried to bring a rattlesnake home in a burlap bag. As you can imagine, the snake did not appreciate the accommodations, so he got loose, slithering under the driver's seat of Lynn's car. Lynn's abrupt exit from the vehicle created quite a hazard that day, with the snake as the only occupant of the now driverless vehicle rolling down the gravel roads near his childhood home.

When I talk about missing Lynn, I also have to talk about the farmers and ranchers in my State who will miss having him here in Washington. More than once, agricultural groups in South Dakota have asked Lynn to keynote during annual banquets. On one occasion, I offered to give a speech but was told that Lynn was the preferred speaker.

Lynn will be sorely missed, but he has more than earned his retirement. I know how much he is looking forward to spending more time with his wife Mary and with their 5 children and 10 grandchildren. I know he and Mary plan to travel to Hawaii and Alaska and that it is a goal of Lynn's to visit as many national parks as he possibly can.

I know he will enjoy sitting, watching the waves with Mary at their house in Alabama and, of course, continuing to farm his corn and soybeans in South Dakota.

Lynn, thank you for your service and your friendship. May God bless you in your retirement.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

9/11 VICTIM COMPENSATION FUND

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, it is the morning after. This is a happy morning after because the 9/11 bill passed. Now it is on its way to the President's desk. My understanding is he is certain to sign it, and our first responders can breathe a sigh of relief. It is wonderful.

I am filled with gratitude for a lot of people, above all for those who rushed to the Towers, those patriots, those brave men and women who put American freedom above their own safety, defending us at a time when we were under attack.

God bless them. God bless those who have passed from the illnesses. God bless those who are suffering from the illnesses. God bless those who will get illnesses yet unknown and their families, their friends, their units—fire, police, port authority, the military, you name it. Yesterday, I met an FBI agent—I had not met her before—who was there and who was suffering from cancer. God bless them all.

First and foremost, I want to thank so many people who made this happen, beginning with Senator GILLIBRAND, a champion for this issue like no other. She was constantly here on the floor buttonholing people—and she is persistent, those of us who know her—over and over again until she got names like COTTON and CRUZ to support our bill, which was a big turning point. I also thank her legislative director, Brooke Jamison. She was sort of the quiet force behind all this, and I thank her as well as the rest of the Gillibrand staff.

To our cosponsors in the Senate, every one of them, thank you.

I thank the leaders in the House—Congressmembers MALONEY, NADLER, KING, and so many others.

Then there were the great advocates, Jon Stewart and John Feal. Man oh man, they were the heart and soul of this operation, and they kept going and going and going until they succeeded—one of my great joys.

My great sadness was meeting some of the widows. I knew the widow of Ray Pfeifer, for whom the bill is named. I met briefly the family of Detective Alvarez while at his wake, and that was a sad thing. But a happy thing was seeing the genuine smiles on the faces of Stewart and particularly Feal, who doesn't smile that much, but now he can. That was a joy.

Suzu Ballantyne and Ben Chevat were just relentless.

What about all the labor leaders and unions—and by the way, construction workers were another group who rushed to the Towers and suffered many losses; let's not forget them—the labor leaders and unions that organized with us every step of the way: the UFA, the UFOA, the NYPD and the Port Authority unions, the PBA, the DEA, the teachers, the laborers, AFL-CIO, AFGE, AFSCME, and so many more.

The union movement always protects its workers. We need them to be stronger in America. That is one of the reasons income is going up to the top and not going to the middle class anymore—because we don't have as strong unions as we should. But the unions, when they get behind something, God bless them.

Finally, I need to thank the first responders who came here themselves and who delayed cancer treatments to testify at hearings, who wheeled the Halls of Congress in their wheelchairs to chase down legislators, who gifted lawmakers their NYPD badges and FDNY patches—the sacred totems of their service—to remind those public servants to do the right thing. Many are no longer with us: James Zadroga, Luis Alvarez, and my dear friend Ray Pfeifer. Wherever they may now be, let them breathe a final sigh of relief knowing their friends are cared for and the job is well done.

MUELLER REPORT

Mr. President, on another issue, all eyes are no doubt on the House Judiciary Committee, where, as I speak, former Special Counsel Robert Mueller is testifying. His testimony is unquestionably of great interest and importance to the Nation. But even without the special counsel's testimony today, Congress must grapple with the report he has already written.

The principal conclusion of the first section of the Mueller report was that Russia interfered in our 2016 elections, in his words, in a “sweeping and systematic” fashion. What he described in that section of his report constitutes nothing less than an attack on our democracy. It is almost like going to war and hurting our men and women in the Armed Forces.

This administration and this Chamber frankly have done not enough—not nearly enough—to respond to that attack and to prevent such an attack from taking place again.

I know we are going to have a great deal of debate on the obstruction of justice—I am appalled by what the President did there—but there should be no debate on, A, Russian interference in our election—that is unequivocal—and, B, that we must do a lot more about it to prevent it from happening in 2020.

The Trump administration has been horrible on this issue—unpatriotic, un-American, and almost letting America fall prey to a nasty, brutal foreign power: Russia. This administration has watered down or failed to fully implement sanctions against Russia for what they did in 2016, and in the Senate, as usual, our Republican colleagues bow down in obeisance.

Leader MCCONNELL—shame on him—has stymied progress and consigned bipartisan bill after bill to his legislative graveyard. These are bipartisan bills. There are so many Republicans who want to do something here. Leader MCCONNELL doesn't. And that has nothing to do with Democrat, Republican,

liberal, conservative; that has to do with patriotism and defending America. Bipartisan bills to harden our election structure are languishing. The Republican majority has even blocked Democratic requests to provide additional election security funding to the States.

Just yesterday, the FBI Director confirmed that President Putin remains intent on interfering in our elections, and we haven't done enough to deter that. Next to the brazenness of President Putin's assault on our democracy in 2016, the response of the Republican majority in the Senate has been tepid.

I know there were great divisions about certain parts of the Mueller report. We are seeing it in the hearings going on now. But there can be no division—and I haven't heard any Republican on that panel so far contest the fact that Russia interfered in our elections in a strong way in 2016. Why aren't we doing something about it now? Let's forget the political divisions. Let's forget the pettiness of President Trump, who says: Well, my election may not be legitimate if I admit that the Russians interfered.

President Trump, the Russians have interfered, and every American knows it. Let's not let it happen in 2020. Let's work together on this. It is vital to the future of American democracy.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

VOTE ON STEPHEN M. DICKSON NOMINATION

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Dickson nomination?

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON) would have voted “yea.”

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 225 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Alexander	Fischer	Portman
Barraso	Gardner	Risch
Blackburn	Graham	Roberts
Blunt	Grassley	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeben	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Collins	Kennedy	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	McConnell	Tillis
Crapo	McSally	Toomey
Cruz	Moran	Wicker
Daines	Murkowski	Young
Enzi	Paul	
Ernst	Perdue	

NAYS—40

Baldwin	Hirono	Schatz
Blumenthal	Jones	Schumer
Brown	Kaine	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Sinema
Cardin	Leahy	Smith
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Udall
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murphy	Warner
Durbin	Murray	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Peters	Wyden
Hassan	Reed	
Heinrich	Rosen	

NOT VOTING—8

Bennet	Harris	Sanders
Booker	Isakson	Warren
Gillibrand	Klobuchar	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Wendy Williams Berger, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

Mitch McConnell, Bill Cassidy, David Perdue, John Thune, Roy Blunt, Thom Tillis, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Braun, James E. Risch, Mike Rounds, John Cornyn, Mike Crapo, Johnny Isakson, John Boozman, Marco Rubio, Kevin Cramer, Pat Roberts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Wendy Williams Berger, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 55, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 226 Ex.]

YEAS—55

Alexander	Gardner	Portman
Barrasso	Graham	Risch
Blackburn	Grassley	Roberts
Blunt	Hawley	Romney
Boozman	Hoeven	Rounds
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Burr	Inhofe	Sasse
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Jones	Scott (SC)
Collins	Kennedy	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sinema
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Manchin	Thune
Crapo	McConnell	Tillis
Cruz	McSally	Toomey
Daines	Moran	Wicker
Enzi	Murkowski	Young
Ernst	Paul	
Fischer	Perdue	

NAYS—37

Baldwin	Heinrich	Schatz
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schumer
Brown	Kaine	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Smith
Cardin	Leahy	Stabenow
Carper	Markey	Tester
Casey	Menendez	Udall
Coons	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warner
Duckworth	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Peters	Wyden
Feinstein	Reed	
Hassan	Rosen	

NOT VOTING—8

Bennet	Harris	Sanders
Booker	Isakson	Warren
Gillibrand	Klobuchar	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 55, the nays are 37.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Wendy Williams Berger, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Brian C. Buescher, of Nebraska, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nebraska.

Mitch McConnell, Roger F. Wicker, Pat Roberts, Chuck Grassley, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton, David Perdue, Ron Johnson, Joni Ernst, Mike Braun, Martha McSally, John Boozman, Richard Burr, Lindsey Graham, Shelley Moore Capito, Johnny Isakson, Thom Tillis.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Brian C. Buescher, of Nebraska, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nebraska, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN), and the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 39, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 227 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Alexander	Fischer	Portman
Barrasso	Gardner	Risch
Blackburn	Graham	Roberts
Blunt	Grassley	Romney
Boozman	Hawley	Rounds
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Sasse
Capito	Inhofe	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott (SC)
Collins	Kennedy	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	McConnell	Tillis
Crapo	McSally	Toomey
Cruz	Moran	Wicker
Daines	Murkowski	Young
Enzi	Paul	
Ernst	Perdue	

NAYS—39

Baldwin	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Rosen
Brown	Jones	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Sinema
Casey	Manchin	Smith
Coons	Markey	Stabenow
Cortez Masto	Menendez	Tester
Duckworth	Merkley	Udall
Durbin	Murphy	Van Hollen
Feinstein	Murray	Warner
Hassan	Peters	Wyden

NOT VOTING—9

Bennet	Harris	Sanders
Booker	Isakson	Warren
Gillibrand	Klobuchar	Whitehouse

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 39.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Brian C. Buescher, of Nebraska, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

BUDGET AGREEMENT

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, earlier this week, the administration and House Democrats reached a bipartisan budget deal to deliver on the President's priorities and prevent a funding crisis this fall.

As our Armed Forces continue their global engagements, this agreement importantly secures the funding necessary to maintain readiness and modernize the force. It provides increased defense spending to recover from the depressed military readiness rates of the previous administration. It provides our men and women in uniform with the resources, equipment, and training they need in order to defend our freedoms.

I know Congress deals with a lot of different topics, and all of them, by and large, are important, but there is nothing more important, nor is there anything more quintessentially a Federal Government responsibility than national security.

All other considerations aside, if this bipartisan budget deal did nothing more than fully fund our national security efforts, I would support it, but importantly, it also keeps other important elements of the congressional consensus intact—things like the Hyde amendment, which, as the Presiding Officer knows, since the late 1970s has ensured that no taxpayer dollars can be used to fund abortions. In addition, this agreement prevents our Democratic colleagues from trying to block President Trump from using funds to strengthen border security.

The administration—Secretary Mnuchin—negotiated a tough deal and one that excludes any radical, leftwing poison pills—a difficult task in these times, to be sure.

We know they wanted to use policy riders—nearly 30 of them and counting—to try to implement elements of the Green New Deal to undo the President's regulatory reforms or to rewrite our immigration laws through the back door. Earlier this year, their far-left policy riders led to the longest government shutdown in history and almost prevented the enactment of bipartisan border supplemental funding. I saw the devastating impact that shutdown had on dedicated public servants across the country, especially in Texas. This agreement will prevent another senseless shutdown and ensure that the trains of government run on time.

To be sure, no bipartisan agreement is ever perfect. That is the definition of a negotiation—both sides give a little. It is the nature of compromise, which

is a necessary part of effective governing. There is no doubt that there are other priorities I would have liked to have seen included in the deal. I wish we had done something to reform our entitlement programs, which will continue to outpace inflation and increase our national deficit. Someday, we are going to have to deal with our deficits and debt; I just hope it is not during the time of a national emergency. But as a practical matter, Speaker PELOSI wasn't going to agree with such far-reaching reforms in the context of this spending deal and debt limit provision. Thankfully, the President was able to secure half of the spending cuts he asked for—roughly equal to next year's increase in non-defense spending.

Above all, this deal carries out the most critical responsibilities of the Federal Government, which is to support our national defense and fully fund the government's operation.

Again, I appreciate the President's efforts here and particularly those in his administration who helped negotiate this bipartisan deal—particularly Secretary Mnuchin. I look forward to supporting it.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. President, last week, the National Center for Health Statistics released preliminary data showing that drug overdose deaths in America declined by about 5 percent last year. Before anybody begins to applaud, let me point out that drug overdoses killed more than 70,000 Americans the year before. So a 5-percent reduction is welcome, but obviously it is still very alarming. This 5 percent decline is the first national drop in three decades, though, and for communities across the country that continue to battle the opioid epidemic, it is a small indication that our efforts here in Congress are having an impact. We certainly have a long fight ahead of us, but this is an encouraging sign.

If you look closer, the data shows that the decline is due almost entirely to a decrease in prescription opioid-related deaths. Those caused by other opioids—particularly fentanyl and heroin—remain on the rise.

The cruel reality is that the more we step up our efforts to limit prescription opioid diversion, the higher the demand is for other illegal drugs, many of which come across our southern border. We can't limit our efforts to what can be done here at home. In order for our work to be successful and for us to save more lives, we have to stop this poison from entering our country in the first place.

I have the honor of cochairing the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control with Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN of California, where we are working on ways to do exactly that—to slow down the poison coming across our borders.

If you look at many of the challenges we face here at home—whether it is the opioid epidemic, the humanitarian cri-

sis at the border, the criminal gangs on our streets—much of that can be directly traced to the violence that exists in Central America and Mexico.

This morning, I had the pleasure of speaking at the Hudson Institute about my proposal to attack this crisis from every angle, an all-government approach, something we call the New Americas Recommitment to Counternarcotics Operations and Strategy. As the Presiding Officer knows, we love a good acronym here in Washington, DC, so we can simply refer to this initiative as the NARCOS Initiative.

First, it takes aim at the dangerous substances that are crossing our southern border. Customs and Border Protection officers are incredibly well-trained and equipped to find illegal drugs, and seize an average of 5,800 pounds of narcotics each day. By the way, on June 16, Customs and Border Protection seized 20 tons of cocaine—which is the largest seizure in the 230-year history of Customs and Border Protection—with an estimated street value of \$1.3 billion. So good for them. They are extremely professional and well-trained law enforcement officers.

As we know, many of these drugs managed to make their way into the interior of our country and into local communities, causing untold misery and grief. Stopping their production and movement is not a fight we can win alone. It will take a bipartisan, long-term commitment from the Federal Government, as well as our foreign partners. An important step is to strengthen law enforcement cooperation by improving intelligence-sharing and providing training for some of our foreign partners. It is an important force multiplier and a necessary component of our counternarcotics efforts.

In addition to attacking the drugs themselves, the NARCOS Initiative goes after the cartels and transnational criminal organizations that profit from this business. These groups are what I call commodity-agnostic. They really don't care who they hurt or what they ply. The only thing they care about is making money. It is not just narcotics they are dealing; it is human trafficking, migrant smuggling, money laundering, counterfeit goods, public corruption. The list of crimes is long, indeed, and they do all of it.

These transnational criminal organizations turn an enormous profit from their corrupt dealings, and then they have to launder the money they use to finance their operation. We know that one of the most effective ways to suffocate criminal networks is to cut off the money, so that is precisely where we should aim.

The Senate Judiciary Committee recently passed legislation to combat money laundering and other illicit financing, which includes a provision that I offered that has to do with the role of remittances. According to the United Nations, over \$300 billion in illicit transnational crimes proceeds

likely flows through the U.S. financial system. The provision included on remittances requires Treasury to submit an analysis of the use of remittances by drug kingpins and crime syndicates and develop a strategy to prevent them from using that remittance system in order to launder proceeds from criminal enterprises.

It is also time for us to reevaluate our current strategy and to determine how to update the Bank Secrecy Act, which was enacted more than 50 years ago and is the primary money laundering law regulating financial institutions.

In addition to fueling violence and instability, the conditions in Central America serve as a push factor. As human beings, we all understand people fleeing violence and poverty. So encouraging those countries to provide safety and stability for their own people so they can stay in their homes and live their lives ought to be one of the things that we do. Otherwise, these push factors encourage migrants to take the same routes used by cartels and criminal organizations to reach the United States. As we know, some of them simply don't make it. They die in the process. Young girls and women are routinely sexually assaulted. It is a miserable alternative to staying at home and living in safety and security.

We know all of this has contributed to the humanitarian crisis at our southern border. We all know but have not yet had the political will to reform our broken laws and prevent these smugglers and criminal organizations from gaming the system.

I know the Presiding Officer was at the border earlier this week. I have tried to figure out how we crack this nut. How do we take this polarized environment and provide the tools necessary to begin to staunch the flow of humanity coming across our border? They are attracted by the easy access to the United States through our broken laws but also the push factors, like the violence and poverty in their countries.

I am working with a Democratic colleague of mine from Laredo, TX, HENRY CUELLAR. Together, we introduced the HUMANE Act, which made great strides to help fix our broken asylum system in a way that would give legitimate asylees an opportunity to present their case on a timely basis in front of an immigration judge. It would also make sure the conditions of their custody while they are here in the United States are something we can be proud of. Specifically, what this bill does is closes a loophole in the law known as the Flores settlement, which is often used by smugglers to gain entry into the United States. It would streamline the processing of migrants and improve standards of care for individuals in custody.

If we want to restore law and order and make it sustainable, we need to look at ways to invest in economic development to help these countries build

stronger economies. But I share some of the concerns expressed by the President and others. We need some metrics. We need a strategy. We need reliable foreign partners that can work with us.

The one effort I can think of where we actually were successful working with foreign partners and strong leaders to really effect a dramatic change is the nation of Colombia, so-called Plan Colombia. Obviously, Mexico and the region are much more complex, and Plan Colombia doesn't easily fit on top of that region. I think the concept is a sound one, one in which we come together on a bipartisan basis, develop a strategy, help train our foreign partners, and seek out strong leaders who can help us work through these challenges, because there is a multiplicity of challenges, as I have indicated.

One of the things that would help is to ratify the new and improved NAFTA, known as the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or the USMCA. Obviously, a strong economy in Mexico means people don't have to come to the United States in order to provide for their families. The International Trade Commission's analysis of the agreement shows some positive indicators for North American workers, farmers, ranchers, and businesses. About 5 million American jobs depend on the binational trade with Mexico alone, which is some indication of how important this is.

We can strengthen public-private partnerships in other ways to help add to the effort to provide for investment, a clean environment, and a positive relationship with our colleagues in Mexico. One example is the North American Development Bank. For every one NAD Bank dollar that has been invested in a project, it has successfully leveraged \$20 in total infrastructure investment in using both private- and public-sector dollars. To that end, I have introduced legislation with Senator FEINSTEIN, of California, that would authorize the Treasury Department to increase NAD Bank's capital and provide additional authority that is specifically related to port infrastructure.

We know the ports of entry are not only avenues of commercial trade and traffic but are where a lot of the high-end or expensive illegal drugs are smuggled through. We need to modernize those ports of entry. We need to expand the infrastructure and make sure they are adequately staffed, not only to facilitate the flow of legitimate trade and travel but also to stop these drugs from coming through the ports of entry.

I just want to say a few words about this NARCOS Initiative. I believe that we do need an all-government approach that would address the broad range of problems across Central America and Mexico, including with the transnational criminal organizations themselves, with the products and services they provide, as well as with the corruption they fuel and the means

by which they stay in business, but we are going to need responsible partners in this effort.

As our own experience with nation-building in the Middle East has demonstrated, we can't want something for them that they don't want for themselves. That is why it is so important to have a clear understanding about what the strategy is, what the goals are, and to have strong, reliable leaders in those countries who will work with us in a bipartisan way to accomplish our collective goal.

We have both the responsibility and the opportunity to make meaningful changes to stabilize the region, and I believe the time to act was yesterday. I hope our colleagues will join me in supporting this legislation to promote a secure and prosperous Western Hemisphere.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

29TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise to celebrate one of the seminal moments in American civil rights history. This week marks the 29th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. On July 26, 1990, President George H. W. Bush signed a sweeping, bipartisan bill that acknowledged and affirmed the rights of people with disabilities.

The passage of the so-called ADA promised that people with disabilities would be included in the guarantee of fundamental rights—just by way of examples, the right to petition the court when discriminated against; the right to apply for and be considered for a job; the right to have and having the access to vote; the right to economic security; the right to live where you want to live.

Twenty-nine years later, our country is better because we agreed to make the opportunities of our country accessible to all. The ADA changed the lives of 61 million Americans with disabilities and has made our Nation more accessible. The ADA proclaimed that Americans with disabilities must have the right and the means to fully participate in their communities. The ADA offers a path toward a truly accessible nation and elevates the voices of millions of individuals.

One of those voices belongs to Jean Searle from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Jean works at Disability Rights Pennsylvania, where she protects the rights of people with disabilities so they may live the lives they choose—free from abuse, neglect, discrimination, and segregation.

As a child and young adult, Jean was forced to live in an institution. In that institution, she faced many indignities, the worst of which may have been having had her infant child taken from her

without her consent. Simply because Jean lived with a disability, it was often assumed that she was not capable of making her own decisions, but she worked hard to find a way out of that institution. When she finally succeeded, she chose to live independently in her community and has found a fulfilling career in Harrisburg.

The rights affirmed by the ADA and the services and supports Medicaid and other programs have provided have made it possible for Jean to be a full citizen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and, yes, even of the United States of America. Jean has dedicated her life to protecting the rights of people with disabilities.

During this ADA anniversary week, it is also fitting that today is Jean's birthday.

So, Jean, in looking at your picture on my left, I say happy birthday. I know many here would wish the same if you were here in person on the floor with us. I am honored to share your birthday.

Let me pause here.

Almost 30 years after her infant son, whom I referred to earlier, was taken from her, Jean had the opportunity recently to meet him for the first time. Jean often says that to make the world a better place, we need to spend our time listening to people with disabilities and learning from the disability community.

Well said, Jean.

When I listen, I hear about the greatness of the ADA and, at the same time, about much more that still needs to be done. One of those things is to protect what we have. That includes protecting access to healthcare, preventing the repeal of the Affordable Care Act, and ensuring that Medicaid remains intact. We also need to combat threats to people with disabilities.

Over the past 2 years, we have seen a systemic and concerted effort to sabotage supports that are necessary for equality, opportunity, and the full participation of people with disabilities. What this administration has failed to do with legislation it is trying to accomplish through regulation and court cases. Cutting Medicaid is contrary to the ADA's goals, and it makes it difficult—or even potentially impossible—for people with disabilities to work, to go to school, or to be engaged in their communities.

While we protect the hard-fought rights the disability community has earned, we can also build upon the ADA's promises. As we celebrate the ADA's 29th anniversary, we can do at least three things—honor the great advancements that have been made because of the ADA; remain vigilant to attacks on those civil rights; and work to ensure that the ADA's goals are realized for all people with disabilities.

I believe Jean's own words make the point clearer than I can.

We must never go back. We must never forget the struggle that people with disabilities have gone through and are still going through today.

We must never go back, as Jean said. So, as we celebrate the ADA's 29th anniversary, I promise—and I know it is the promise of many Members of Congress—to never forget that struggle. I also promise to stand side by side with the disability community to fully accomplish the ADA's goals.

Mr. BROWN. Will the Senator from Pennsylvania yield?

Mr. CASEY. I yield to Senator BROWN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I appreciate Senator CASEY's advocacy for disabled Americans and for children especially.

I just want to make a brief comment, for I know he has some other comments to make, on his support for Medicaid and on the efforts that we have made together on the Finance Committee in fighting against President Trump's attacks on Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act.

I know, in my State, the expansion of Medicaid and what came out of that meant that 900,000 more people had insurance, including a whole lot of people who were disabled. I know that Pennsylvania is the same way. So I thank Senator CASEY.

Mr. CASEY. I thank the senior Senator from Ohio, who makes the point broadly about the importance of Medicaid in the context of healthcare but especially with regard to Americans with disabilities. I thank him for his comments, and I thank him for his advocacy.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. President, my second topic involves a visit that I and a delegation of Senators made just a week ago—it will be a week ago on Friday—to McAllen, TX. I guess there were 13 of us in total. During that visit and throughout the course of the day, we toured DHS detention facilities—DHS is the Department of Homeland Security—including the Border Patrol facility in McAllen, TX, and the processing centers in both Donna and Ursula, TX.

I saw children who needed better care. I saw the overcrowding of adults, who were packed into cages or glass-enclosed rooms, and you couldn't hear the voices of those behind the glass. I saw the need for hygiene products and better access to showers. At the same time, we also saw Catholic Charities—the Respite Center, run by Sister Norma Pimentel, known to so many as just “Sister Norma”—where migrants were welcomed, where migrants were cared for, and where migrants were treated with compassion.

I believe the White House's policies take the opposite approach—that of not welcoming migrants but of pushing them away. I believe several of those policies make it bad not only for the migrants or immigrants but also for the DHS personnel who have to do the work every day. It is also bad for the security of our Nation.

I know, last Friday, that our delegation met a number of dedicated per-

sonnel who work hard and who care about the families, but I cannot say that about all of those who work there. So, when there is mistreatment or when there is abuse, we need to make sure there is full accountability. At the same time, there are folks who work in our government who may not agree with the White House's policy on immigration or asylum or on its migration policy in general but who have difficult work to do. To those who are doing good work and showing compassion and respect, I commend them for that.

Instead of closing the door on asylum seekers who flee terrible violence and persecution, we should adopt policies that are more humane and that will help alleviate instead of exacerbate the humanitarian crisis. We should utilize effective alternatives to detention, like the Family Case Management Program—a pilot program that began in the last administration and pretty much ended in this administration. It had a 99-percent attendance rate—or success rate—at immigration court proceedings. The Family Case Management Program also had 99-percent compliance with ICE's monitoring requirements.

We should ensure that migrant children are cared for by child welfare workers and have their medical needs fully met. We should also work to address the violence, poverty, and persecution that are causing so many to flee. I am a cosponsor of the Central American Reform and Enhancement Act, which is legislation that would address the root causes of migration by increasing aid to the Northern Triangle, creating new options for refugees to apply for entry from Mexico and Central America, and, of course, increasing the number of immigration judges to reduce court backlogs and creating new criminal penalties for the smuggling and defrauding of immigrants.

We know that some of the dollars recently appropriated will help on some of these priorities, but we have to make sure the dollars are spent wisely and appropriately and in full compliance with the law.

We are indeed a nation of laws, and we are also a nation of immigrants. These two principles are intertwined in our values, and they are not—they are not—competing values.

We should be trying over and over again—both parties, both Chambers, and the administration—to pass something comparable to the comprehensive immigration reform bill that this body passed in 2013 that did not get a vote in the House.

Let me conclude this part of my remarks with this: The problem is not that we must choose between principles like being a rule-of-law country and being a nation of immigrants; the problem is that our immigration system is badly broken. If there are suggestions to be made to improve the asylum process, we should be open to that, but pushing immigrants away

and ending or short-circuiting or undermining the asylum process is not in the interest of the country.

It is entirely possible to have an immigration system that both respects the rule of law and treats all individuals with human dignity. I will continue to press the administration and the House and the Senate to work on bipartisan solutions so our immigration system again reflects those American values.

MUELLER REPORT

Mr. President, I will conclude my remarks by raising the third topic, and it is timely for today. I want to do two things with regard to the service and the work of former Special Counsel Robert Mueller but also talk about the report he issued.

There is a reference in a narrative about Robert Mueller's service in Vietnam that I won't add to the RECORD because it is very long, but I will quote from it for just a couple of minutes. This is an account by the publication *Wired*. It is a long account, but I will just briefly read the beginning of it about his service.

Just imagine this: someone who grew up with probably not too many concerns about economic security; someone who had the benefit of a great education and then volunteered to serve in Vietnam.

This particular vignette says:

After [serving] nine months at war, he was finally due—

“He” meaning Robert Mueller—

—for a few short days of R&R outside the battle zone. Mueller had seen intense combat since he last said goodbye to his wife. He'd received the Bronze Star with a distinction for valor for his actions in one battle, and he'd been airlifted out of the jungle during another firefight after being shot in the thigh. [Robert Mueller] and [his wife] Ann had spoken only twice since he had left for South Vietnam.

Then it goes on to say why he wanted to keep serving in the Marine Corps:

I didn't relish the US Marine Corps absent combat.

Then it goes on to talk about his decision to go to law school after being in Vietnam, with the goal of serving his country as a prosecutor. He went on to lead the Criminal Division of the Justice Department and to prosecute a lot of bad guys—my words, not words from the publication—and then “became director of the FBI one week before September 11, 2001, and stayed on to become the bureau's longest-serving director since J. Edgar Hoover. And yet, throughout his five-decade career, that year of combat experience with the Marines has loomed large in Mueller's mind. ‘I'm most proud the Marine Corps deemed me worthy of leading other Marines,’ he [said] in . . . 2009.”

So that is his background—just some of his background: service to his country in Vietnam, service as a Federal prosecutor for many, many years, and then called upon to serve his country again. He is the embodiment of public service. He gives integrity and meaning

and value to what President Kennedy called us all to do—to not ask what our country can do for us but what we can do for our country. Robert Mueller has answered that call over and over again. He is a person of integrity and ability.

For just a few minutes before I yield the floor, I want to talk about some of his work.

One of the points then-Special Counsel Mueller made in a statement I guess back in May was—he first of all outlined how the Russian Federation interfered with our election and pointed to the serious consequences of that, but then he also talked about how—when the second volume of the report deals with obstruction, he reminded us in that statement—at least I took from it, my impression of the statement—of not just the seriousness of what Russia did but the seriousness and the gravity of obstructing that kind of an investigation.

So if someone wanted to read just a portion of the report—the almost 500 pages—if you wanted to just zero in on some key parts of volume II about obstruction, you could start on page 77. That is a section titled “The President’s Efforts to Remove the Special Counsel.” Then there are other instances—several instances of obstruction—alleged obstruction there. So if you read between pages 77 and 120 of volume II, you are going to learn a lot about obstruction. Let me read a couple of the lines that the report sets forth.

When the special counsel walks through the factual predicate of what happened in the first instance where the President calls the White House Counsel, Mr. McGahn, and says some things that the special counsel concluded were a directive to fire or have fired the special counsel, they say in the report on page—this is volume II, page 88:

Substantial evidence, however, supports the conclusion that the President went further and in fact directed McGahn to call Rosenstein to have the Special Counsel removed.

Page 89:

Substantial evidence indicates that by June 17, 2017, the President knew his conduct was under investigation by a federal prosecutor who could present evidence of federal crimes to a grand jury.

It goes on from there in the “Intent” section, where the special counsel has to lay out the evidence to prove intent because if you can’t prove intent, you can’t go much further.

Substantial evidence indicates that the President’s attempts to remove the Special Counsel were linked to the Special Counsel’s oversight on investigations that involved the President’s conduct and, most immediately, to reports that the President was being investigated for potential obstruction of justice.

So those are just three vignettes from pages 88 and 89, operative words there being “substantial evidence.” In other parts of the report, evidence is laid out. Sometimes they say there is not enough evidence, but I think “sub-

stantial evidence” is a compelling part of what we saw.

Let me just quickly—because I know I am over time. I will now move to page 113. This is a separate section. This section is titled “The President Orders McGahn”—White House Counsel McGahn—“to Deny that the President Tried to Fire the Special Counsel,” so referring back to the earlier section, and then, when they go through the evidence, they again get back to the consideration or the weighing of the evidence.

I am looking at volume II, page 118—again, those words:

Substantial evidence supports McGahn’s account that the President had directed him to have the Special Counsel removed, including the timing and context of the President’s directive; the manner in which McGahn reacted; and the fact that the President had been told conflicts were substantial, were being considered by the Department of Justice, and should be raised with the President’s personal counsel rather than brought to McGahn.

So you get the message I am sending. And the last one is on page 120—“Substantial evidence indicates” the following facts.

So I raise all that because there is a lot of discussion about volume II and what the conclusion might have been. The reason I refer to those areas of substantial evidence is that in May of this year, there was a statement by former Federal prosecutors. We were told that as many as 1,000 bipartisan prosecutors from both parties signed a letter, and I will read just one sentence from the letter: “Each of us”—meaning these Republican and Democratic former prosecutors—“believes that the conduct of President Trump described in Special Counsel Robert Mueller’s report would, in the case of any other person not covered by the Office of Legal Counsel’s policy against indicting a sitting President, result in multiple felony charges for obstruction of justice.”

I think those prosecutors—I believe those prosecutors are resting that determination that they each made individually on those areas of the report that begin with the words “substantial evidence indicates.”

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROMNEY). The Senator from Iowa.

EB-5 PROGRAM

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the Senate floor to advise my colleagues about a new rule that the Department of Homeland Security published in the Federal Register this very day to finally bring some needed reform to the EB-5 green card program.

As I mentioned in my remarks on this topic last week, this rule was first proposed in January 2017. Those of us who want to reform the EB-5 program have been waiting 2½ years for this rule to become final, and we have been waiting much, much longer than that for some meaningful reforms to this fraudulent-laden program that we tried to get enacted into law in previous

Congresses and couldn’t get done because of being up against these very powerful, moneyed interests. I think the President and his team deserve a lot of credit for pushing these reforms across the finish line and getting a big win for rural America.

As I have said on numerous occasions, Congress intended for the EB-5 program to help spur investment in rural and high-unemployment areas when this program was established in 1990. Unfortunately, over the last 30 years, big-moneyed interests have been able to gerrymander EB-5 targeted employment areas in a way that redirected investment away from our rural and economically deprived communities and towards major development projects in Manhattan and other big cities. Therefore, instead of providing much needed investment for rural America, as originally intended, EB-5 has become a source of cheap foreign capital for development projects in already prosperous areas of America.

For the first time, this rule will bring much needed change so that condition cannot continue. Under the rule, States will no longer be allowed to game and gerrymander targeted employment areas. Instead, the Department of Homeland Security will make targeted employment area designations directly based on revised requirements that will help to ensure rural and high-unemployment areas get more of the investment they have been deprived of for far too long under this program, as it has been misdirected.

Again, this is a major win for rural America and high-unemployment areas, and I want to sincerely thank President Trump and the people in the administration who worked on this rule for making this happen and looking out for the interests of my constituents in Iowa and other rural States and for areas of high unemployment.

This rule also addresses the minimum investment threshold amounts that are required for the EB-5 projects around the country.

This is the very first time the investment thresholds have been adjusted since the program was created in 1990. Think of the inflation since that time.

For projects that are outside of targeted employment areas, the threshold will be raised from \$1 million to \$1.8 million. For projects in targeted employment areas, the threshold will be raised from \$500,000 to \$900,000. The minimum investment amount will be automatically adjusted for inflation every 5 years.

It is ridiculous that our country’s major green card program for investors has been operating with investment amounts that haven’t been adjusted a single time in 30 years. That makes no sense, and I am glad the President and his team have taken necessary action to restore a little common sense to the EB-5 program.

There is more work that needs to be done on the EB-5 program, and we will

have to do that by legislation, but the President and his administration deserve a lot of credit for finally implementing these first reforms that I and several other colleagues have championed for years.

I, more than most, understand the power and influence that big-moneyed EB-5 interests have historically had in Washington, and how they have used that power and influence to consistently thwart any attempt to reform this program in such an obvious way that it is needed.

Their unrelenting efforts to stymie EB-5 reform over the years absolutely epitomize the swamp culture that so many voters rejected in the last Presidential election, and getting rid of that swamp culture is exactly what the President campaigned on. This is a perfect example of his carrying out a campaign promise.

They are also representative of a culture in Washington that too often disregards the interests of the little guy in rural Iowa in favor of the interests of the rich and the powerful. Again, I applaud the President and his team for standing up to these rich and powerful interests.

I am happy to say that, with the publication of this rule, the little guys in rural America finally got a win in the EB-5 program. I now look forward to working with the President and my colleagues to build off of this win and bring further reform to the EB-5 program in the future. Thank you, President Trump.

BUDGET AGREEMENT

On another subject, for the past week there have been ongoing discussions between congressional leadership and the administration relating to an agreement on budget caps and raising the debt limit. Those discussions produced an agreement that was announced Monday night.

While I understand reaching an agreement was important to ensure the full faith and credit of the United States, I am disappointed the final agreement does not address a subject that has been causing heartache for millions of taxpayers for at least the past 6 months. The subject is what is known around Capitol Hill and Washington, DC, as tax extenders, things that come up every 2 or 3 years that need to be reauthorized.

For decades, Congress has routinely acted on a bipartisan basis to extend a number of expired or expiring provisions. Typically, their extension would be included as part of a larger spending package or budget deal at the end of the year. Unfortunately, this never occurred at the end of last year. Now, here we are almost 7 months into the end of 2018 and 3 months after the close of the regular tax filing season, and taxpayers still have no answers.

The budget and debt limit agreement announced Monday is yet another missed opportunity to provide answers for millions of taxpayers—both individuals and businesses—who are waiting

on Congress so they can finalize their 2018 taxes and, in some cases, it may even mean whether or not they can stay in business.

While Finance Committee Ranking Member WYDEN and I, working as a team, have been ready and willing to address tax extenders since early on in this Congress, the new Democratic majority in the House of Representatives has been reluctant to act. It seems as though the House Democrats are unaware of the historic bipartisan, bicameral nature of tax extenders or how those provisions even apply to taxpayers, to industries, and maybe helping the entire economy. This is evidenced from the characterization of these provisions by some of these Members as “just tax breaks for corporations and businesses.” So I want to tell you how these are not just tax breaks for corporations and businesses.

In fact, the overwhelming majority of the tax extenders either benefit individuals and families directly or they benefit our communities by giving a boost to local businesses that many people directly rely on for jobs and to support their local economies.

For illustration purposes, I have broken the tax provisions that expired in 2017 into four categories: tax relief for individuals, green energy incentives, employment and economic incentives for distressed areas, and general business incentives.

If you look at this chart, you will see that these four categories are broken down by the relative costs of the extension of the tax extender in each category. As you can see, based upon Joint Committee on Taxation estimates—these aren't my estimates, but Joint Committee on Taxation estimates—of a 2-year extension of these provisions for 2018 and 2019, the largest cost associated with extending them is for what is termed “green energy incentives.”

These green energy incentives account for nearly 60 percent of the cost of this extension. These incentives include provisions to encourage the use and production of clean and renewable fuels, to promote electricity generation from certain clean and renewable sources, and tax incentives for more energy efficient buildings and homes.

Here I would have thought the new Democratic majority in the House would be all about what we call green jobs, and reducing our Nation's carbon emissions through alternative energy sources is what we are talking about here. Yet the new Democratic majority has been reluctant to embrace a bipartisan tax package with nearly 60 percent of the cost dedicated to green energy incentives.

The long delay in addressing these provisions is needlessly putting thousands of good-paying green jobs at stake. A couple weeks ago, we saw a biodiesel plant in Nebraska close down, costing about 40 employees their jobs. Just this very day, a renewable energy group announced it is closing a Texas plant due to the uncertainty of the bio-

diesel tax credit. Should we fail to extend the biodiesel tax credit soon, many more will be closed. That would put the 60,000 jobs supported by the biodiesel industry nationwide in jeopardy.

Going to another one, after this green energy proposal which I just discussed, individual provisions represent the second largest component of tax extenders, totaling nearly one-third of the cost. These provisions include relief for homeowners who obtained debt forgiveness on home mortgages, a deduction for mortgage insurance premiums, and a provision that allows college students to deduct tuition and related expenses. In regard to college students, wouldn't you think the new Democratic majority would be interested in helping college students?

They also include incentives for individual consumers to purchase energy-efficient products for their homes, as well as certain types of alternative vehicles.

To highlight just one of these provisions, in 2017, over 1.5 million taxpayers took advantage of the college tuition deduction. You can think of that as over 1.5 million students who have been left dangling for last year and this year as Congress continues to consider whether or not to extend this college tuition deduction. For some, this deduction of up to \$4,000 for education expenses can make the difference between continuing their education or waiting another year to finish a degree and to move up to a better job.

The remaining two categories are small in terms of cost in comparison to the first two. The provisions relating to employment and economic initiatives for distressed areas makes up only 4.1 percent of the overall cost and consists of two provisions. One would be the Indian employment credit, and the other would be the empowerment zone incentives.

Now, this is really odd. It is really hard to believe the new House Democratic majority finds it very objectionable to incentivize employers to hire Native Americans or, for the second part of it, to provide incentives to encourage businesses to locate and bring jobs to low-income areas. I hear the new majority in the other body talking that we don't do enough to help low-income people. What is better than providing them with jobs and doing it through the empowerment zone incentives tax credit so you get capital in there to build jobs up in low-income areas?

If we can't address these two employment and economic incentives, how are we going to deal with two much larger ones that expire at the end of this year—the work opportunity tax credit and the new markets tax credit—all to create jobs?

I guess it must somehow be the final category, which I have termed general business incentives, that the House Democratic majority must find objectionable because it falls into the category that we are only trying to help

big business or big corporations. That is their accusation.

These provisions make a whopping 4.5 percent of the total cost of extending provisions that expired at the end of 2017. Most of these provisions have very minimal cost as they only accelerate when a business may deduct certain deductions and not whether the costs are deductible in the first place.

However, the most costly of what I term general business incentives is also likely the most popular. I am going to show you in just a minute. It is the most popular because it has such an overwhelming number of cosponsors in both bodies. That is the short line tax credit. This provision offers a tax credit to short line railroads for qualified maintenance expenditures. This credit isn't available to the largest railroads, which we call the class 1 railroads. This credit benefits smaller railroads that are critically important for farmers and many manufacturers to get their products to the global markets. For example, in my State of Iowa, according to recent data from the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association, there are nine short line and regional railroads.

This credit isn't just supported by and important to the railroads themselves; it is also supported by the users of short line railroads who depend on these railroads to get their products to market around the world. For example, Midwest soybean farmers selling to the Asian market typically must ship their crop by rail to the Port of Seattle, and the short line railroads are part of that railroad system and are critical to that transportation network.

The fact is, this provision is far more than some sort of giveaway to business. It is a provision that is important to whole communities. This is probably a big reason why legislation making this short line tax credit permanent currently has 50 cosponsors in this body of the Senate and 228 cosponsors in the House of Representatives.

I hope I have been able to clear up some of the misunderstanding regarding tax extenders for the new Democratic majority in the House, not only on the substance of these tax extenders but also on the fact that extending these tax credits has been both bicameral and bipartisan for at least a couple of decades. Extenders are not just about businesses or corporations. This overwhelmingly benefits individuals—individuals. It benefits green energy and promotes job creation in urban and rural communities alike.

In order to provide certainty—and you need certainty in tax law. If you want to provide certainty to the people who relied on these provisions in 2018 and potentially this year, we should extend them at least through 2019 as quickly as possible. This could have been done as part of the bipartisan agreement on budget and debt limits announced Monday. Unfortunately, I fear a misunderstanding of what extenders really are by the new Members

in the House of Representatives and whom they benefit on the part of the same Democratic House majority contributed to these extenders being left out of the deal announced Monday.

I know there are those who question the need to extend these provisions in perpetuity. It happens that I agree with those points of view. That is why the Finance Committee, which I chair, created a series of task forces to examine these policies for the long term.

The task forces were charged with examining each of these provisions to determine if we can reach a consensus on a long-term resolution so that we don't have to have an extended debate every 2 years about extending extenders or tax credits.

I look forward to receiving the summations of the task forces that I have appointed later this week. Hopefully, these submissions will provide a basis for the Finance Committee to put together an extenders package before the end of the year that includes longer term solutions for as many of these temporary provisions as possible.

This is important so that we can stop the annual exercise of kicking the can down the road. However, in the meantime, I remain committed to acting as soon as possible so that taxpayers who have relied on these provisions in 2018 don't end up feeling like Charlie Brown after Lucy pulls the football away.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

ALLOWING THE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR OF THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION ON THE DATE OF ENACTMENT OF THIS ACT TO CONTINUE TO SERVE AS SUCH DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, as in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2249, introduced earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2249) to allow the Deputy Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration on the date of enactment of this Act to continue to serve as such Deputy Administrator.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. BARRASSO. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 2249) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 2249

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AUTHORITY FOR CONTINUATION OF SERVICE OF THE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR OF THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—An individual serving as Deputy Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration on the date of enactment of this Act may continue to serve as such Deputy Administrator, without regard to the restrictions specified in the 5th sentence of section 106(d)(1) of title 49, United States Code.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed as approval by Congress of any future appointments of military persons to the Offices of Administrator and Deputy Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today again, as I have week after week, to highlight the healthcare policy disaster the Democrats have labeled as Medicare for All. This mislabeled, one-size-fits-all approach takes health insurance away—takes it away—from 180 million Americans who have earned and who get their health insurance on the job.

Still, many Democratic Members and many Presidential candidates support this radical proposal, which would actually eliminate on-the-job insurance. Offered originally by Senator SANDERS, this so-called Medicare for All bill would dramatically raise taxes. It would destroy Medicare as we know it, and, of course, it would ration care.

Last week I discussed healthcare rationing in Britain and in Canada. Today my focus is the plan's impact on medical innovation. As a doctor, I continue to remain astonished at how far medical technology has come in the 30 years since I started to practice medicine. Scientific breakthroughs are saving lives all around the world. I know because my wife Bobbi is a breast cancer survivor.

According to the American Cancer Society, the death rate for women with breast cancer has fallen nearly 40 percent. More women are living longer after being diagnosed and treated. The progress is due to earlier detection as well as better treatment. It is a combination.

This is not limited to breast cancer alone. The death rate for all cancer patients has steadily declined. The diagnosis of cancer is no longer considered a death penalty. People survive and thrive. We have made tremendous strides. U.S. brain power has led the way. According to the New York Times, the United States is "home to an outside share of global [healthcare] innovation."

The innovation comes from America. Patients the world over depend upon our medical breakthroughs.

What happens if we put Washington in charge of all of U.S. healthcare? Washington bureaucrats—not you, not your family, not your doctor, not scientists, but Washington bureaucrats—will call the shots.

Let's look again at Britain, which has a government-run system. There was a recent headline in the British

newspaper, the Guardian, and it is enlightening. It says this: "NHS cancer scans left unread for weeks." The cancer scans have been left unread for weeks.

The Guardian reports: "Cancer scans showing the presence or spread of the disease are going unread for as long as six weeks." Think about that. You are a patient. It is cancer. It is ongoing, and it is spreading. You have had a scan and have been waiting 6 weeks to know what is happening with your own body.

Cancer scan reports used to take a week; then, about a month and now, 6 weeks. As a result, according to one of the radiologists in Britain, "[u]nexpected and critical findings are going unreported for weeks." As he said, "We are now just firefighting."

The patients are getting the scans, and they are waiting for results. American patients simply would not tolerate this. They wouldn't in my home State. They wouldn't in your home State, Mr. President.

American patients will not tolerate this. That is why we can't afford to lose our competitive edge. The return of our investment in medical research and development in this country is absolutely tremendous. It is thanks to U.S. investment and innovation. That is why patient care is improving not just in the United States but worldwide.

President Trump is asking Europe and other developed countries to start paying their fair share. The President is right. American patients shouldn't have to foot all of the bill for global cures. Still, U.S. patients will surely suffer if Washington bureaucrats start blocking new innovations.

As I said last week, the Congressional Budget Office came out and talked about their report on what Medicare for All would mean, and they said that there would be a delay—a delay in treatment, as well as a delay in technology if we had a one-size-fits all healthcare system and 180 million Americans lost the insurance they get from work.

Patients in England have bureaucrats as judge and as jury weighing the value of every advancement, seeing if they can even have it in that country. What we see is that the bureaucrats are denying lifesaving treatment, much of it invented in the United States.

British patients recently protested their National Health Service. They protested because the National Health Service refused to permit the use of a cutting-edge drug to treat cystic fibrosis. The protesters ended up placing T-shirts in Parliament Square, representing the 255 people in England who have died as a result of the refusal of England to approve the use of a drug that exists and that works.

Of course, we all agree the prices of medications need to come down. In England, the government just says: No, we are not going to have that treatment, that cure, to be used in our country.

We need to get the cost of care down. We also need to protect innovation because that is the future of healthcare. Doctors and scientists need the freedom to give us the next generation of lifesaving drugs. That is why I am concerned that under the Democrats' plan such medical progress is threatened.

Clearly, Democrats have taken a hard-left turn when it comes to healthcare and when it comes to the role of imposing more government in our lives. They want to take away your health insurance, the one you get from work, and in place of on-the-job insurance, they want one expensive, new, government-run program for everyone.

Democrats' extreme scheme is expected to cost \$32 trillion. It is so expensive, in fact, that even doubling everyone's taxes wouldn't cover it. That means Washington bureaucrats will be restricting your care. You will lose the freedom to choose your doctor. You will lose the freedom to choose your hospital. You will have the freedom to make choices about your own life, and bureaucrats will limit your access to new treatments as well as cutting-edge technologies.

It is hard to know how many months you will have to wait for urgently needed care. We have seen it in Canada. We have seen it in England. We do not want to see it here in the United States. Delayed care becomes denied care.

Why should you pay more, which is what this so-called Medicare for All does? You will be paying more to wait longer for worse care. Why would America want that? That is exactly what the Democrats are proposing.

Meanwhile, Republicans are focused on real reforms—reforms that lower costs without lowering standards. That is the key difference. We want to lower costs but not standards.

In England, they say: Well, it is free, but you are going to have to wait for a long time for your free care. As I reported last week, people have actually gone blind while waiting and others have died while waiting.

The Democrats' proposal actually lowers standards while limiting your choices and raising your costs. It is time to reject the Democrats' one-size-fits-all healthcare scheme. Instead, let's ensure our patients get the innovative care they need from a doctor they choose at lower costs.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SASSE. Mr. President, today is a good day for this body, for the State of Nebraska, and for every American who is committed to the rule of law, includ-

ing our first freedom, which is religious liberty.

In a few minutes, we will be voting to confirm Brian Buescher to be the U.S. Federal district judge for the District of Nebraska. Brian is a born-and-raised Nebraskan. He is a husband, a father of five, and for nearly two decades he has served his home State admirably in the legal profession. His nomination is an honor for our State, and it is a testament to his integrity and to his tireless service. At the same time, Brian's confirmation process has been an occasion for one of the most baffling displays of constitutional confusion and prejudice I have seen in my time here.

Brian is a Catholic, and he is a member of the Knights of Columbus. The Knights of Columbus is the largest Catholic fraternal organization in the world. The organization has 1.6 million members. It raises millions and millions of dollars every year for charity, and they contribute millions—literally millions and millions—of hours of volunteer and charitable service for their neighbors.

Like a lot of Catholic men in Nebraska, Brian joined the Knights of Columbus as a way to give back to his community. This is not a scandal. This is actually just really basic—sometimes really boring—love of neighbor, but it is the kind of stuff that makes communities work.

According to some of my colleagues on the Senate Judiciary Committee, Brian's association with this extraordinary charitable organization—again, really mundane, the Knights of Columbus, the largest Catholic fraternal organization in the world—according to some of my colleagues, the Knights of Columbus is an extremist outfit. One of my colleagues suggested that Brian needs to resign his membership in the Knights if he were confirmed to the Federal bench to avoid the appearance of conflict and bias—really bizarre stuff.

To be clear, the Knights of Columbus is not some shadowy organization from a Dan Brown novel. The Knights is a bunch of guys who organize fish fries, and sometimes they sell Tootsie Rolls, but basically what they are doing is helping to fund organizations like the Special Olympics. That is what they do in Omaha, in Lincoln, across Nebraska, and across the country. It is really weird that we are talking about the Knights of Columbus as an extremist organization.

In this weird rebirth of McCarthyism, it seems that the Catholics are to replace the Communists. This isn't just Brian. We have had other nominees come before the Senate Judiciary Committee this year being asked questions laughably close to: Are you now or have you ever been involved in the organization of a fish fry?

We have people asked questions that sound like they are going to be called to account for what their prayer may have been at the last pancake feed: Have you or your colleagues ever been

involved in any plot to overthrow the government at a fish fry?

One of our nominees was asked: How long has the dogma lived loudly within you, and if you had to rank the dogma on a volume scale from 1 to 10, just how loud is the dogma?

This stuff seems almost laughable, unless you pause and recognize that the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee is asking nominees questions like this. This shouldn't be happening.

Again, just so we are clear, a U.S. Senator, who has taken an oath to uphold and defend the Constitution, asked Brian, as a faithful Catholic, to resign his membership in the Knights of Columbus to "avoid the appearance of bias."

The implication in these questions is really straightforward. It is that Brian's religious beliefs and his affiliation with his Catholic religious fraternal organization might make him unfit for service.

Let's put it bluntly: This is plain, unadulterated anti-Catholic bigotry. This isn't a new thing in U.S. history; it is just a new, new thing. John F. Kennedy, 60 years ago, was asked, as he was running for President, some really similar questions.

It is also plainly unconstitutional. Every Member of this body, all 100 of us, has raised our hands and took an oath to defend the Constitution, which in article VI states in language so clear that even a politician has to acknowledge that it does what it says: "No religious test shall ever be required as qualification to any office or public trust under the United States."

I just want to say this again. This is just straight out of the Constitution, article VI. "No religious test shall ever be required as qualification to any public office or public trust under the United States."

That is why—because this was happening in the Senate Judiciary Committee—in January, I led a charge on the floor to push through a resolution to reaffirm our oath of office to the Constitution that rejects religious bigotry. I called on every Member of this body to affirm that we respect the freedom of every American to worship as he or she sees fit and to live out their faith in the public square.

Fortunately, the Federal Government and politics, more broadly, is not in the business of trying to resolve questions of Heaven and Hell. That is not what we use politics for in this country. Here, we are only in this worldly business of trying to maintain the peace and the public order necessary so every individual can make their own decisions about ultimate matters, about last things for themselves under the dictates of conscience, not trying to submit to the whims of politicians or political movements. This is a great American blessing and we need to reaffirm it and we need to reteach it every occasion we have that opportunity.

Happily, the unanimous support for that resolution was an encouraging

step. Today, in a few minutes, when Brian Buescher is going to be confirmed as a U.S. district judge for the District of Nebraska, we will see another important step, which is a reaffirmation and a confirmation to the American people that people of every faith and of no faith—to Protestants and Catholics, Jews and Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists, agnostics, atheists, and otherwise—that in America, you have a place in the life of this Nation.

We don't have to resolve every conflict, even conflicts and arguments and debates about things more important than politics. We don't have to resolve every conflict to agree that we will live peaceably today in this colony. This should be a reaffirmation of the basic American belief that there is room in this country to disagree.

In fact, so much of what makes this country exceptional is that we do disagree about some of the most important things and some of the ultimate things. Yet we do it without severing all the temporal bonds that bring us together as friends, neighbors, citizens, and patriots.

Brian is a good man, and I am convinced Brian is going to be a great judge. I suspect that he and many of his other fellow Knights of Columbus in Omaha are going to be organizing fish fries together again next spring, and I look forward to joining them at those fish fries.

So today I am pleased to celebrate with Brian and his family and the whole State of Nebraska his confirmation to the Federal bench, and I celebrate, too, this victory for our principled American commitment to religious liberty for each and every American.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

BUDGET AGREEMENT

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, thank you for your accommodation today. I rise to talk about another responsibility we have in the Senate; that is, to fund the Federal Government.

Our Nation was built on debate and compromise. If you read what the Founding Mothers and Founding Fathers debated in Chambers just like this and then later in this Chamber through the first 100 years of our existence, there was hot debate and many disagreements, but somehow they found a way to find a compromise.

Our Founding Mothers and Founding Fathers believed rightly that to get the best results, both sides had to come to the table to make a deal. This week, the Trump administration and congressional leaders, including Speaker PELOSI, reached a critical 2-year com-

promise on spending levels and the debt ceiling.

Like any compromise, this funding agreement is not perfect. Neither side got everything it wanted. It accomplishes three important things, however.

First, it will provide certainty to our military. This is critical after the last decade, when 2 years ago, two-thirds of our F/A teams couldn't fly. Only 3 of our Army brigades could fight that night out of the 58 Army brigades we have. Our readiness was terrible. This deal will continue to reestablish readiness for our military, provide our troops with the compensation and benefits they deserve, and take care of our veterans here at home.

Before this, three Democratic Presidents disinvested in the military. That is just historic fact. It was done in the seventies, it was done in the nineties, and it was done by the prior administration.

Second, none of the liberal poison pills or riders actually ended up in this final bill. Going forward, President Trump and congressional Republicans will ensure that we keep those out but in the spirit of compromise and hard negotiation.

Third, and most importantly, this deal keeps the ball moving on the process of funding the government on time to avoid another devastating shutdown or continuing resolution. However, despite these benefits, this deal highlights two significant problems. These are not new.

First, Washington's funding process is broken. The current system is inefficient and time-consuming. It has actually only funded the government on time four times in the last 45 years since the 1974 Congressional Budget Act was put into place. We now have just 13 working days between now and the end of this fiscal year. We are supposed to have 12 appropriations bills and \$1.3 trillion of funding appropriated by the end of that time, by September 30. Good luck with that.

So here we are in the eleventh hour. We just made a big agreement, and I believe now the pressure is on to get defense and some of the domestic spending appropriations done certainly by September 30 so we can avoid the draconian impact of continuing resolutions on our military.

The lack of time means that for the second year in a row, Congress has had to rush in order to fund the government in the last moments of the fiscal year. Last year, we stayed here in August during the work period, and we went from 12 percent funding to 75 percent funding, and this year we have the opportunity to do that.

I believe the plan is in place, when we come back this September, that we can actually get upward of two-thirds done by the end of September, which would include the military, which would avoid this CR issue we have been talking about.

This process has been the norm in Washington for decades, however. This

is nothing new. Since the Budget Act of 1974 was put in place, we have only done this four times, as I said. We cannot allow this process to continue this way.

Last year, we had a joint select committee, as you know. I believe we have four things that we can move on this year in terms of bills and possibly change this going forward. The American people sent us here to get this job done. It is time we break through all this—the logjam of politics—and face the fact next year that our No. 1 priority is to fund the government.

The second problem this budget deal has highlighted is the most important issue facing our country, in my opinion—the \$22 trillion debt crisis. While this deal provides for all discretionary spending, the current budget deal does not include mandatory spending, nor does any other prior spending bill include mandatory.

By law, all the budget does and all the appropriations do is deal with the discretionary budget, which is only \$1.3 trillion of \$4.6 trillion in total money that we spend as the Federal Government. So you say: Well, what is the difference? Well, we spent \$1.3 trillion. Well, what is in that? That is military, Veterans' Administration, and all domestic discretionary spending. Well, what is in mandatory? Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, pension benefits, and the interest on the debt, which, by the way, has gone up over \$450 billion in the last 2½ years.

Let me put this into perspective. This budget deal only increases discretionary spending from last year's level over the next 2 years by \$54 billion. That is 2 percent per year for the next 2 years. That is lower growth in spending on discretionary items than the growth of our economy at the moment. That means that in 2 years, the spending on discretionary spending items will be less as a percentage of our economy than it is today.

This is an incredibly important point and was a major goal of President Trump's going into this process. The problem is, the CBO projects that mandatory spending and interest payments will grow in that same period over the next 2 years by \$420 billion. That is our problem. This is what is driving the huge increases on our debt over the next two decades. In these 2 years, ironically, half the increase in the mandatory spending is in interest expense. Even with interest rates being historically low, that is the case. Imagine what we would have if interest rates were at their 30-year average of 5 to 6 percent.

Right now, 70 percent of what the government spends is made up of mandatory spending, as I said: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, pension benefits for Federal employees, and the interest on the debt. Many of these programs are in dire need of reform. The Social Security Trust Fund goes to zero in 16 years. The Medicare trust fund goes to zero in 7 years. It is imper-

ative that we save these important programs. Yet nothing is being done when we deal with the discretionary part of this budget.

Instead, Congress has been wrangling over the discretionary budget, which makes up just 30 percent of all spending. The whole situation shows just how shortsighted Washington is. Rather than address the long-term problems facing the country, Congress keeps kicking the can down the road. Fortunately, there are five steps, ultimately, we can take to address this long-term fiscal problem.

First is we have to grow the economy. Check that box because the economy is moving. Regulatory work, energy, taxes, and Dodd-Frank have kick-started this economy, creating 6 million new jobs. The economy is growing at about twice the rate it did under the prior administration, so the economy is growing.

Second is to root out redundant spending; third, fix the funding process; fourth, save Social Security and Medicare; and lastly, we have to finally address the underlying drivers of our healthcare costs.

Thanks to President Trump's leadership, we already have the first part covered. Unemployment is the lowest it has been in 50 years. Our energy potential has been unleashed. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act has brought new investment to our country.

I want to highlight again the driver here. I am going to show a chart just as I close. Mandatory spending is the No. 1 problem we have with our debt crisis. The bottom line here is discretionary spending. The vertical dotted line is today, 2019. You can see, over the last decade or so, that discretionary spending has been relatively quiet. We have had some increase. The green line is total spending, but the orange line is the total mandatory line. You can see the explosive nature of growth from today forward.

That is why this conversation today is so timely because, in the past, while it was going up, it is going up geometrically in the next 20 years compared to what it has been. That is a function of the growth of the size of the debt itself and also because of the aging demographic of our population. As more and more people retire and go into Medicare and Medicaid, you will see these numbers continue to rise. These are Congressional Budget Office numbers. This highlights how serious this is and why all the drama is on the 30 percent down here and why we have to change the rhetoric here, change the predicate of discussion and start talking about the mandatory expenditures and how we save them.

Solving the debt crisis is the right thing to do and the only thing to do. The world needs us to do this, and the time is right now. Given that, this budget deal is a reasonable compromise, and we now need to make sure we appropriate to avoid any continuing resolution for our defense funding.

Going into the next year, now that we have an agreement on a topline for discretionary spending for 2020, we need to expedite appropriations to ensure we avoid the unnecessary drama next year. This is one reason why I ran for the Senate. We have to get serious about the long-term implications of our debt. The world knows that. Our people know that. The problem is the political will has been missing in Washington.

We passed one milestone, hopefully, with this agreement on the topline, and we will move to appropriations, but we have to move, starting immediately, to change the process so we don't have this drama next year and we begin the dialogue about how to save Social Security and Medicare.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PERDUE). The Senator from Nebraska.

NOMINATION OF BRIAN C. BUESCHER

Mrs. FISCHER. Mr. President, I rise today to voice my support for Brian Buescher, President Trump's nominee to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of Nebraska.

Near the end of 2017, both Senator SASSE and I were given notice that Chief Judge Laurie Smith Camp would assume senior status on Nebraska's Federal bench. Many people may not know this, but the case docket for the U.S. District Court for the District of Nebraska is among the busiest dockets in the Nation. In recent years, the district has carried some of the highest per-judge criminal caseloads in the country, which surpasses judicial districts that include New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles. That is why it is critical to both Nebraska and our Nation that the Senate delivers an exceptional judge to fill this vacancy without further delay.

In this spirit, both Senator SASSE and I worked quickly to begin the open-application process. Nebraska is the proud home of many brilliant legal minds, and we thoroughly studied every application and interviewed qualified candidates. After an extensive search spanning the course of a few months, Senator SASSE and I came to a conclusion. We would recommend to President Trump that Brian Buescher be nominated as the next judge on Nebraska's Federal district court.

Mr. Buescher is a proud husband and father of five children who have been his biggest cheerleaders throughout this long confirmation process. He grew up in Clay County, NE. There he learned the importance of hard work at a young age on his family's farm, where they raised corn, milo, wheat, alfalfa, hogs and cattle. It is also from this upbringing that he developed a keen appreciation for how the law directly affects the everyday lives of Americans and even more so for those who live and work in America's heartland.

After receiving his undergraduate degree from the University of Nebraska-

Lincoln, Brian was accepted into law school at Georgetown University. He thrived both in and out of the classroom. He was editor-in-chief of the Georgetown Journal of Ethics and vice president of the Georgetown Law Student Bar Association.

Mr. Buescher is currently a partner at Nebraska's largest law firm, Kutak Rock. He is chairman of the firm's agribusiness litigation team and oversees large, complex commercial litigation, which includes environmental law, food law, real estate, class actions, product liability, and banking.

He has gained invaluable experience as a litigator, and his resume speaks for itself. His success includes favorable rulings in cases heard by Nebraska and Iowa's State and Federal courts, the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, and the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Nebraska. Time after time, case after case, he has demonstrated his commitment to upholding the Constitution and the rule of law.

In 2017, the American Agricultural Law Association awarded him the award for Excellence in Agricultural Law in Private Practice. The American Bar Association rated Mr. Buescher as "qualified" by an overwhelming majority. His 20 years of litigation experience has unquestionably prepared him for his next life chapter as a U.S. district court judge.

Nebraska's former secretary of State, John Gale, recruited Brian to serve on the Nebraska State Records Board. Secretary Gale noted that "Mr. Buescher reflects the highest level for the qualities needed for a district judge, ranging from intelligence, integrity, professionalism, attentiveness, character, and skillful articulation to a deep understanding of the rules and procedures of the courtroom."

While everyone who has worked with him praises his legal acumen, those who know him on a personal level speak to his integrity and his character. One of his friends from college who has known Brian for a quarter of a century praised his commitment to serving the community and his qualities as a husband and father. His friend concluded: "I can say with complete confidence what kind of person Brian is and that there is nothing that should give you hesitation about his confirmation."

By all accounts Brian Buescher has enthusiastic support in Nebraska for his superb legal work and fairminded disposition.

I was proud to introduce Mr. Buescher at his confirmation hearing before the Senate Judiciary Committee last November. I sincerely hoped that my Democratic colleagues would see Mr. Buescher for who he was—a sharp legal mind and a man of high character. However, my Democratic friends on the Judiciary Committee deployed unjust, bigoted attacks instead of using reason and open-mindedness. They could not criticize his solid record nor his judicial philosophy. So

they reverted to attacking his personal religious beliefs. Both the junior Senator from California and the junior Senator from Hawaii questioned Mr. Buescher's membership in the Knights of Columbus.

For anyone who may be unaware, the Knights of Columbus is not a radical interest group. It is not political at all. The Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Roman Catholic fraternal organization. Their motto is "In service to one, service to all," and they are founded on the core principles of charity, unity, and patriotism.

Over the last decade, the Knights of Columbus have donated \$1.1 billion to charities and performed more than 68 million hours of volunteer service. In 2017 alone, local councils donated and distributed over 105,000 winter coats for underprivileged children through their "Coats for Kids" program. They have raised more than \$382 million in the past three decades to help groups and programs that support the intellectually and physically disabled. Whether it is providing food and shelter for refugees, rebuilding homes for families that are struck by natural disasters, volunteering at veterans medical facilities, or simply having pancake breakfasts to raise money for local schools, the acts of charity and kindness of the Knights of Columbus are truly inspiring.

That is why I was shocked to hear that Mr. Buescher received a letter from the junior Senator from Hawaii following his confirmation hearing that suggested he leave the Knights of Columbus to "avoid an appearance of bias." The notion that being a Knights of Columbus member is disqualifying to serve on the Federal bench is disturbing on its own, but holding religious tests for our judicial nominees blatantly ignores the Constitution and tears at the fabric of our core American values—the freedom to worship and pray as we choose.

Fortunately, the Senate passed a resolution earlier this year that condemned unconstitutional religious tests for nominees.

President Kennedy endured anti-Catholic attacks throughout his 1960 campaign, and for me it was exceptionally troubling to see that rhetoric return to the Senate in 2019. Now we will have another chance here in the Senate to send a clear message that we share our Founding Fathers' contempt for religious tests for public office by confirming Brian Buescher to the Federal bench.

In closing, I think it is important to reiterate that reverence for our Constitution and our laws is part of what it means to be an American. My friend Peggy Noonan characterized this best a few weeks ago in her Wall Street Journal column. She described a young politician in 1838 who gave a speech to a Midwestern youth group about public policy and the political events at the time. The last of our Founding Fathers had recently died, and in their absence, our Nation felt lost.

The Founders were a visual representation of American values and modeled our first principles in their behavior. After their deaths, these core values were being forgotten and mob rule began to rise, threatening our Republic. The young politician had a solution: Our people should transfer reverence for our Founders to reverence to the laws that they created. He said: "Only reverence for our Constitution and laws" will protect our Nation's political institutions and retain the "attachment of the people."

The speaker that day, in 1838, was Abraham Lincoln, who was 28 years old at the time. He understood the delicate nature of our laws—that when our laws collapse, everything else in our Nation can crumble with it.

I believe that to love our country we must respect our Constitution and apply the laws fairly to all. When we do so, we not only honor our past, but we protect the future generations of this great Nation. We can do that here in the Senate by appointing exceptional judges to the Federal bench, and I can say with great confidence that Mr. Buescher will be one of them. He is a well-qualified nominee and a man who possesses high ethical standards. I have no doubt that Brian Buescher will honor his family, our State, and our Nation with his service on the U.S. District Court for the District of Nebraska.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote in favor of his nomination.

I yield the floor.

NOMINATION OF WENDY WILLIAMS BERGER

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, Judge Wendy Williams Berger has honorably served the State of Florida for several years, and I proudly support her confirmation as a district judge for the Middle District of Florida today. Throughout her distinguished legal career, she has remained committed to upholding the rule of law, prosecuting criminal offenses as an Assistant State Attorney for Florida's Seventh Judicial Circuit, and subsequently presiding as a circuit court judge for that same judicial circuit. As Governor of Florida, I was honored to appoint Judge Berger to the Fifth District Court of Appeal in 2012, and I am proud to support her confirmation to the Federal bench, where she will continue her exemplary service to our State and Nation.

Mrs. FISCHER. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Wendy Williams Berger, of Florida, to be United States District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Berger nomination?

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 54, nays 37, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 228 Ex.]

YEAS—54

Alexander	Gardner	Perdue
Barrasso	Graham	Portman
Blackburn	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hawley	Roberts
Boozman	Hoeven	Romney
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Rounds
Burr	Inhofe	Rubio
Cassidy	Johnson	Sasse
Collins	Jones	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Shelby
Cramer	Lee	Sinema
Crapo	Manchin	Sullivan
Cruz	McConnell	Thune
Daines	McSally	Tillis
Enzi	Moran	Toomey
Ernst	Murkowski	Wicker
Fischer	Paul	Young

NAYS—37

Baldwin	Heinrich	Schatz
Blumenthal	Hirono	Schumer
Brown	Kaine	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Smith
Cardin	Leahy	Stabenow
Carper	Markey	Tester
Casey	Menendez	Udall
Coons	Merkley	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warner
Duckworth	Murray	Whitehouse
Durbin	Peters	Wyden
Feinstein	Reed	
Hassan	Rosen	

NOT VOTING—9

Bennet	Gillibrand	Klobuchar
Booker	Harris	Sanders
Capito	Isakson	Warren

The nomination was confirmed.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the next nomination. The legislative clerk read the nomination of Brian C. Buescher, of Nebraska, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nebraska.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Buescher nomination?

Mr. WICKER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET), the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. BOOKER), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND), the Senator from California (Ms. HARRIS), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), and the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) are necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 51, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 229 Ex.]

YEAS—51

Alexander	Fischer	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Portman
Blackburn	Graham	Risch
Blunt	Grassley	Roberts
Boozman	Hawley	Romney
Braun	Hoeven	Rounds
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Cassidy	Inhofe	Sasse
Collins	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Kennedy	Scott (SC)
Cotton	Lankford	Shelby
Cramer	Lee	Sullivan
Crapo	McConnell	Thune
Cruz	McSally	Tillis
Daines	Moran	Toomey
Enzi	Murkowski	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	Young

NAYS—40

Baldwin	Hirono	Schatz
Blumenthal	Jones	Schumer
Brown	Kaine	Shaheen
Cantwell	King	Sinema
Cardin	Leahy	Smith
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Udall
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murphy	Warner
Durbin	Murray	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Peters	Wyden
Hassan	Reed	
Heinrich	Rosen	

NOT VOTING—9

Bennet	Gillibrand	Klobuchar
Booker	Harris	Sanders
Capito	Isakson	Warren

The nomination was confirmed. The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motions to reconsider are considered made and laid upon the table. The President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The Senator from North Dakota.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oregon.

RECOGNIZING SHELDON WHITEHOUSE'S 250TH CLIMATE CHANGE SPEECH

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, I rise in recognition of a friend and colleague, Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, on this special occasion of his 250th speech in his "Time to Wake up" series, a series of speeches, as far as I know, unparalleled in the history of the Senate for addressing a major national issue, a major world issue—the issue of carbon pollution and climate chaos.

As we take in a breath of air at this very moment, when you are sitting on the dais or at one of the desks or sitting on the benches, that breath of air contains air very different from the air when I was born. The air contains 33 percent more carbon. This has never happened over the lifetime of any individual in the history of the human species on this planet, and it means big changes because every molecule of carbon is grabbing heat and holding on to it.

Out in Oregon that means there are warmer winters, which is wonderful for the pine beetles and bad for the pine trees. It means there is a smaller snowpack that melts earlier, on average, resulting in less irrigation water for our farmers and ranchers. It also means less healthy streams for salmon and trout. It means that a lot of the carbon will be absorbed into the ocean and become carbonic acid, and now we have to artificially buffer the Pacific Ocean seawater in order for baby oysters to survive.

The list goes on, but the point is that these changes are happening not just in my State but all over our country, and not just in our country but all over the world. Most of these changes have manifested themselves within the last 10 years, that is, when we actually see what is happening. Just a couple of years ago, the sea stars off the coast of Oregon started dying, and off the coast of Washington and off the coast of California. In fact, in some areas they have been completely wiped out. The result of that is that the blue sea urchins have exploded without the sea stars to eat them. The result of that is the rapid disappearance of big kelp forests that harbor thousands of species. Who knows what impact that will have on

the chain of life in the ocean or on the fisheries that are such an important part of our economy. In place after place, effect after effect, effects can be measured with a thermometer or with litmus paper for acidity or with a ruler—effects that can be seen by our ranchers, farmers, fishermen, and the forests and timber economy; effects that are felt by the 180 million Americans who suffered through an extraordinary heat wave in what is now expected to be the hottest month in human recorded history, this July.

So we face a huge challenge, but we cannot respond by saying: Oh, my goodness, it is overwhelming. I want to ignore it. Or it is such a large challenge that I cannot make a difference.

Instead, we have to increase our attention. We have to increase our efforts. We have to drive a faster transition off of fossil fuels that are creating the carbon to renewable fuels, and, in so doing, create millions of jobs and make sure they are good-paying jobs, and have a race to the top with project labor agreements and with good family wages and benefits. We need to make sure that we move forward in a fashion that puts jobs in places where they are needed, including in our frontline communities, in our frontier communities, as I like to call them, and in rural parts of Oregon, in our rural communities, in our former fossil fuel communities. Our former fossil fuel workers who did the hard work, took the risks, and suffered black lung should be first in line for new energy jobs in our economy.

But we have no time to wait. This needs to be bipartisan. This is not blue or red. This is planet Earth. We are all on it together. We are all on this little remote planet, a long distance to our next planet, a long distance between our star and the next star. There are an estimated 2 trillion galaxies in the universe with perhaps a billion stars each, but all we have is our little blue-green orb. So let's save it.

Can human civilization rise to the task? That hangs in the balance. We are not doing very well so far.

But my colleague from Rhode Island has given his attention to this analysis, bringing everything to bear, saying: Pay attention and work hard. So I applaud him and thank him for his weekly speeches and his efforts to understand and establish a momentum around a solution and applaud him in this very robust form of leadership on such an important undertaking.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Madam President, in the Senate, in the Congress, and in politics, people are a little too loose with their praise. Everybody is getting applause, everybody is getting thanked, everybody is the greatest, and it gets a little tiresome. So I try to be a little more sparing. I mean you still have to be nice to people, but I try to be a little more sparing because this gets ab-

surd. Sometimes we have caucus lunches, and there are probably 10 or 15 moments when we are all applauding each other. It gets crazy.

But I want to take this moment on the Senate floor to applaud someone who really deserves it and who has really displayed extraordinary leadership. Whatever one may think about the U.S. Senate and how it functions, these are 100 pretty impressive people. They have accomplished something probably prior in their life and just to get to the Senate is a real thing. But SHELDON WHITEHOUSE is the single most fearless individual in politics that I ever have met. He is the single most tireless individual in politics that I have ever met, and it is not just with speechmaking.

Today is a marker because he has made 250. Is it 250 or did the Senator already do it?

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. This is 250.

Mr. SCHATZ. He has done 249, and he is about to do 250, and I will let him get to it. But it will be 250 individual speeches on the Senate floor. Sometimes there are people in the Chamber, and sometimes it is empty and you are talking to these incredible young men and women who serve as pages and the Presiding Officer, who has no choice but to sit there politely. But SHELDON WHITEHOUSE will give his 250th speech on climate, and it is not most of what he has done. It is a small part of what he has done to lead on climate with absolute moral, scientific, political, and pragmatic clarity.

I will just say a couple more things about my partnership with SHELDON. You know, I was a very happy Lieutenant Governor of the State of Hawaii, and I was leading the Hawaii Clean Energy Initiative, which is our effort to get to 100 percent clean energy by the year 2040. The very unfortunate death of Daniel K. Inouye made a vacancy in the Senate seat, and I decided to pursue this Senate seat because I wanted to do something about climate. I didn't know most of the Members except for the famous ones.

When I came to the Senate, everybody told me to talk to SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, and we became fast friends. He comes from the Ocean State, even though that sounds weird to me. I come from the Aloha State, and he comes from the Ocean State, and we have been working together ever since.

But I want to report to whomever is watching that I never felt such momentum on this issue. It is because of the young people who have sort of stormed the castle over the last year or so and demanded change and demanded action and demanded the kinds of change and action that are equal to the scale of this problem.

People will quibble with the political tactics and the messaging and all of that, but when change happens in the United States of America, it is led by young people, and that is what happened. They stormed the castle. Even

those of us who have been working on climate for a long time felt a jolt of energy in a positive way. That is No. 1.

No. 2 is a little unfortunate, but it is changing the politics, and that is events—weather events, climate events. We are no longer talking about climate change as a near-term future issue or a long-term future issue; climate change is now. It is happening across the country. It is not just happening to conservation areas or places where you might enjoy the outdoors; it is happening to communities from coast to coast and everywhere in between. There are record heat waves, record floods, record snowstorms, coral bleaching events. It is very difficult to describe something as a 100-year flood or a 500-year flood—which means it is supposed to happen, statistically speaking, about every 100 or 500 years—if that flood is happening every year.

It is very difficult to ignore the reality of climate change when the last 8 hottest years on record were over the last 9 years. The weather is absolutely getting weirder and more unpleasant, and our storms are getting more frequent and more severe.

Public opinion is moving. Now you have a majority of Republicans, a decisive majority of young Republicans, a huge, vast majority of Independents, and pretty much every single Democrat wanting climate action. The other part of that, which is encouraging, is that Senator WHITEHOUSE has a strategy. He understands it is not enough just to marshal public opinion.

Look at what is happening with gun safety. We are not there yet, even though public opinion is absolutely on our side. Sometimes you have to look at what is structurally happening in politics, especially in the U.S. Congress.

Senator WHITEHOUSE understands that we have to deal with the structural aspects of the way campaigns are funded, the way information and misinformation is propagated, and we need to engage on that battlefield, as well.

I will close with this. A, I have never been so hopeful about the prospect for climate action in 2021, and, B, I have never been so thankful to have a partner who can lead this effort as Senator SHELDON WHITEHOUSE can.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, let me first thank my friend Senator SCHATZ for his incredibly kind remarks. He is an outstanding colleague. We work together extremely well. He brings a good cop "aloha" sensibility to a conversation, whereas I tend to lean more toward the bad cop, and he has a remarkable vision for how this can be solved. I am incredibly honored that he is here.

For the 250th week that the Senate has been in session, I rise to call this Chamber to wake up to the threat of climate change. In April of 2012, I delivered the first of these speeches. I

began: “I know that many in Washington would prefer to ignore this issue, but nature keeps sending us messages—messages we ignore at our peril.”

It was a cry of frustration—frustration that the Supreme Court’s infamous *Citizens United* decision had killed the bipartisan work that I saw here on climate for 3 years; frustration that the fossil fuel industry’s death grip had tightened around this Chamber, preventing action; frustration that our Democratic administration had abandoned leadership on climate change and would barely even talk about it.

It has been a run, and here I am, still at it, 7 years on. Some things have changed; some things have not.

Let’s start with what has not changed. What has not changed is the scientific certainty about what is happening in our atmosphere and oceans. Scientists have understood that burning fossil fuels has caused our planet to heat up since the days when Abraham Lincoln was riding around Washington, DC, in his top hat. This is not new news.

Nearly four decades ago, Exxon’s own scientists reported to Exxon management that there is “little doubt” that atmospheric CO₂ concentrations were increasing due to fossil fuel burning. They said back in 1982 that the resulting greenhouse effect “would warm the Earth’s surface, causing changes in climate affecting atmospheric and ocean temperatures, rainfall patterns, soil moisture, and . . . potentially melting the polar ice caps.”

There was no legitimate debate over the science when I started in 2012, and there is no legitimate debate over the science today. Indeed, the science has only strengthened. With each passing year, as Senator MERKLEY said, we rely less on complicated climate models and on scientific forecasts and, unfortunately, more on straightforward, realtime measurement of the changes. Today, we observe with our own eyes what recently was predicted: glacial collapse and retreat, sea level rise, arctic warming, and increasingly extreme weather.

Another constant since 2012 is the fossil fuel industry’s remorseless campaign, A, to block climate change and, B, to do this while hiding its hands behind front groups. I have delivered dozens of these speeches about the dozens of climate denial front groups. Indeed, we have had whole groups of Senators come to the floor to talk about the web of denial that the fossil fuel industry has constructed to propagate fake science, to hide that it is the fossil fuel industry pulling these strings, and to push its muscle and weight around Congress. Mostly, it is funded by Big Oil and the Koch brothers. They set these groups up, and they set them loose to sow false doubt about real climate science and to obstruct, obstruct, obstruct here in Washington.

They have spent—at a minimum—hundreds of millions of dollars on this

anti-climate campaign. With that money, they have talked up some seriously ridiculous notions, such as carbon pollution is good for us all because carbon is plant food. They have taken out billboards comparing climate scientists to the Unabomber. It is false and ugly stuff powered by hidden money.

Oil giants still spend huge amounts to infect America’s corporate lobbying with their obstruction message. InfluenceMap reckons the biggest anti-climate lobbying force in Washington is the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, a trade group that purports to represent typical patriotic American businesses. It should, more properly, be called the “U.S. Chamber of Carbon.” There it is at the rock bottom, side by side with the National Association of Manufacturers, in a statistical tie for worst obstructor of climate action in America.

Why wouldn’t Big Oil go to all this trouble? They are defending a \$650 billion per year subsidy in the United States alone, according to the International Monetary Fund. So it is logical, but it is still shameful.

There is a vast majority of American companies that have a different view and that want to see climate action. Yet in Congress, that vast majority is a silent majority. When I say “silent,” I mean they are not showing up in Congress—not to push back, not to correct the record, not even to seek serious climate legislation. Corporate America was AWOL in Congress in 2012, and they are AWOL in Congress now. Corporate America’s silence was deafening then, and it is deafening still today.

So what has changed since that first speech 7-plus years ago? First of all, the economics of renewable energy changed in a big way. In 2012, wind and solar weren’t cost-competitive with fossil fuels. Storage and electric vehicles were nowhere. That year, the average cost of solar was over \$200 per megawatt hour. Today, it is one-quarter of that. The cost of wind power is down, and offshore wind is emerging. Battery storage now competes on price with gas-fired, peak-demand plants in many areas. Automakers around the world are making more and more electric vehicles, driving costs down and performance up for consumers. Even with that massive subsidy for fossil fuel, renewables are starting to win on price.

Another new area is that we are starting to capture carbon. This little cube that I have in my hand is CO₂ that was pulled out of the air by direct air capture technology and can be turned into tiles, blocks, bricks. There it is. It is the beginning of a new era of carbon capture. The group that did this is competing in Wyoming this summer for the XPRIZE for carbon capture.

Another big thing that has changed since 2012 is that economists, central bankers, Wall Street bankers, real estate professionals, and asset managers are all recognizing the major risks that climate change poses to the global

economy. It is not free to ignore it, and the costs could come in the form of crashes. Back in 2012, these economic warnings—these crash warnings—were uncommon. Today, they are coming from everywhere.

Freddie Mac predicts that rising sea levels will prompt a crash in coastal property values greater than the housing crash that caused the 2008 financial crisis.

First Street has shown how sea level rises already are affecting coastal real estate values up and down the east coast. It found that rising seas have already resulted in \$16 billion in lost property values in coastal homes from Maine to Mississippi.

Moody’s warns that climate risk could trigger downgrades in coastal communities’ bond ratings. Just last week, the mayor of Honolulu testified at Senator SCHATZ’s Climate Committee’s first hearing that the credit rating agencies are already grilling him about this.

BlackRock has estimated that some coastal communities face annual average losses of up to 15 percent of GDP from climate change by the end of the century. Heads up, Florida.

Coastal property is not the only financial risk. The Bank of England, Bank of France, Bank of Canada, San Francisco Fed, and European Central Bank—along with many top-tier, peer-reviewed economic papers—are all warning of systemic economic risk. That is central banker speak for something that poses a risk to the entire economy, all from stranded fossil fuel assets called the carbon asset bubble.

One other thing I have spent a lot of time on is oceans—the heating, the acidification, the lost and shifting fisheries, the collapse in coral and expanding dead zones, and, of course, the rising sea levels. Our terrestrial species needs to pay a lot more attention to the seas. There has been a real shift in attention in these intervening years.

Then you have Standard & Poor’s, Moody’s, Citigroup, and more economists warning that the costs of climate change will not be measured in the hundreds of billions or even in the trillions but will be measured in the tens of trillions of dollars. That is a penalty worth avoiding and worth the attention in the Senate.

So here I am, 7-plus years later, giving my 250th speech. Somewhere between persistent, tiresome, and, I suppose, foolhardy is where you will find me.

I never thought I would still be at it well into 2019, but the fossil fuel industry, with all of its wretched dark money, is still calling the shots in Congress while the rest of corporate America still sits on its hands. The U.S. Senate still is not seriously considering any legislation to reduce carbon pollution, and I am still frustrated, but I am optimistic because the denial wall is cracking.

Bankers and asset managers and financial titans recognize the massive

economic risks of a fossil fuel-based economy and see the huge economic potential of a low-carbon economy. They now see real business incentive to push back on the fossil fuel denial apparatus. They now see real business peril in allowing the fossil fuel denial apparatus to rule.

I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD at the end of my remarks the “Economists’ Statement on Carbon Dividends” that was published in the Wall Street Journal, which illustrates that exact point.

I am also optimistic because people are talking about climate change again, and colleagues are talking about climate change. Americans everywhere are talking about climate change. Most Republicans want action on climate change. Voters are engaged on climate change, and more than anyone else, young people especially are engaged. From young hero Greta Thunberg to kids all across this country, to the young plaintiffs in the Juliana suit, young people are engaged. Any politician who wants a long career had better care about what young people think. Any political party that wants to matter in a decade had better care.

Over in the House, it is starting to show. A few Republicans have actually introduced legislation to put a price on carbon emissions. Even President Trump—the guy who handed over the keys to his administration to the fossil fuel industry—feels the need now to talk about the environment. As empty as that talk is, the pressure he feels is progress. The fact that he feels he has to talk about it is progress.

As for me, I can’t wait to stop giving these speeches. These speeches chronicle the continued failure of this body and the continued failure of our country to grapple with an evident climate crisis, and these speeches chronicle the fake science and the political mischief and muscle that the fossil fuel industry has used to debauch our American democracy. Marking that sordid history is important, but I want it to be history. When the dark days of denial and obstruction are past, these speeches will no longer be necessary.

I particularly thank my colleague from Hawaii, Senator SCHATZ; my colleague from Oregon, Senator MERKLEY; my colleague from Massachusetts, Senator MARKEY; and other colleagues who have been incredible friends and allies in this fight, like Senator HEINRICH of New Mexico and Senator WARREN of Massachusetts. I thank my colleagues for being here today and for being such extraordinary partners and teammates. We are a band of brothers and sisters in this cause, and our band is growing.

As more and more Americans, from kitchen tables to corporate cocktail parties, come to terms with the real scope of the problem and the danger this failure presents, not only am I proud of my colleagues who are with me already, but I am very hopeful my colleagues across the aisle will also soon become great partners.

Until then, I conclude for the 250th time by saying it is time to wake up.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, Jan. 16, 2019]
ECONOMISTS’ STATEMENT ON CARBON DIVIDENDS—BIPARTISAN AGREEMENT ON HOW TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

Global climate change is a serious problem calling for immediate national action. Guided by sound economic principles, we are united in the following policy as recommendations.

I. A carbon tax offers the most cost-effective lever to reduce carbon emissions at the scale and speed that is necessary. By correcting a well-known market failure, a carbon tax will send a powerful price signal that harnesses the invisible hand of the marketplace to steer economic actors towards a low-carbon future.

II. A carbon tax should increase every year until emissions reductions goals are met and be revenue neutral to avoid debates over the size of government. A consistently rising carbon price will encourage technological innovation and large-scale infrastructure development. It will also accelerate the diffusion of carbon-efficient goods and services.

III. A sufficiently robust and gradually rising carbon tax will replace the need for various carbon regulations that are less efficient. Substituting a price signal for cumbersome regulations will promote economic growth and provide the regulatory certainty companies need for long-term investment in clean-energy alternatives.

IV. To prevent carbon leakage and to protect U.S. competitiveness, a border carbon adjustment system should be established. This system would enhance the competitiveness of American firms that are more energy-efficient than their global competitors. It would also create an incentive for other nations to adopt similar carbon pricing.

V. To maximize the fairness and political viability of a rising carbon tax, all the revenue should be returned directly to U.S. citizens through equal lump-sum rebates. The majority of American families, including the most vulnerable, will benefit financially by receiving more in “carbon dividends” than they pay in increased energy prices.

George Akerlof, Robert Aumann, Angus Deaton, Peter Diamond, Robert Engle, Eugene Fama, Lars Peter Hansen, Oliver Hart, Bengt Holmström, Daniel Kahneman, Finn Kydland, Robert Lucas, Eric Maskin, Daniel McFadden, Robert Merton, Roger Myerson, Edmund Phelps, Alvin Roth, Thomas Sargent, Myron Scholes, Amartya Sen, William Sharpe, Robert Shiller, Christopher Sims, Robert Solow, Michael Spence and Richard Thaler are recipients of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences.

Paul Volcker is a former Federal Reserve chairman.

Martin Baily, Michael Baskin, Martin Feldstein, Jason Furman, Austan Goolsbee, Glenn Hubbard, Alan Krueger, Edward Lazear, N. Gregory Mankiw, Christina Romer, Harvey Rosen and Laura Tyson are former chairmen of the president’s Council of Economic Advisers.

Ben Bernanke, Alan Greenspan and Janet Yellen have chaired both the Fed and the Council of Economic Advisers.

George Shultz and Lawrence Summers are former Treasury secretaries.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I yield the floor.
The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, what an honor it is to be out here with

the great leader from the State of Rhode Island, SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, who has come onto the Senate floor 250 times to say to the Senate and to say to our country that it is time to wake up. His voice is inspiring. His voice cuts through all of the obfuscation that has been paid for by the special interests. It ensures that we hear the truth about the danger climate change poses to our country and to the planet.

I came out here just to say how special it is for me and for every other Member who partners with SHELDON WHITEHOUSE on this issue. This is somebody who has dedicated his career to solving this problem. He knows all issues go through three phases—political education, political activation, and political implementation. He has been a one-man tutor in his educating of the American public and the U.S. Senate on not only the technical aspects of climate change but on the political aspects of it because, ultimately, it is not a technology problem; it is a political problem we have. The technologies are ready to go.

What Senator WHITEHOUSE has done is to have served as this inspirational center point. He has ensured that the voice of sanity has been heard, that the voice of truth has been heard. Why is it important for him to be this incredible leader? It is that climate change—or the climate crisis—is the national security, economic, environmental, healthcare, and moral issue of our time, of this century. Everything he has been saying is something that, in my opinion, is going to wind up putting him in the history books for the incredible leadership he has shown.

There are a lot of times in which you can be right but too soon. People are not ready to hear it. Yet what we are finding across the country is that more and more people are ready to hear it, especially the younger generation, especially people who recognize right now they are going to live their entire lives with this crisis.

How do we know that?

Back in November, our scientists—13 Federal agencies—who were mandated by a 1990 law, had to present a report to the President on climate change. All 13 agencies—the Department of Energy, the EPA, the Department of State—had to come together. Here is what they concluded: If we do not change what we are doing right now, the planet will warm by 9 degrees Fahrenheit by the year 2100. Let’s say that again. The planet will warm by 9 degrees Fahrenheit between now and 2100—81 years from now.

In other words, the pages who are here in the well of the Senate right now will live through this entire story as it unfolds if we continue with business as usual. Interestingly, the consequences are not those the deniers want us to know, for all 13 agencies concluded there could be upward of—get ready for this—an 11-foot rise in the ocean in the Northeastern part of the United States. Think about that—

11 feet higher. The impact would be catastrophic. Our pages will live through this entire story unless we change what we are doing in our country, unless we change what the U.S. Senate does to put preventive measures in place.

What Senator WHITEHOUSE is saying is: Wake up. The science is clear, and it is unchallengeable.

Our problem is that too many Republicans—especially the denier in chief who sits in the Oval Office—are nostalgic for a time that never existed. They pretend, somehow or other, that all of these climate-related problems are going to magically be solved by policies that don't exist and perhaps we are just in some kind of cycle on our planet that will go away and that these young people will not have a legacy of climate change to have to deal with in their lives. Of course, every scientist in America, with the exception of those who are bought by the Koch brothers, bought by ExxonMobil, bought by the fossil fuel companies, agrees that this is going to happen.

From my perspective, what we are seeing is something that is deadly—the forest fires, the extreme heat waves, the supercharged hurricanes, the Biblical flooding. All of it is happening as a result of what human beings are doing to our own planet. Global temperatures are rising like a runaway freight train. This month is on track to be the hottest month on Earth ever recorded. May I say that again? The month of July in 2019 is on track to be the hottest month ever recorded in the history of our planet. Last month was the hottest June in recorded history. Every month so far in 2019 has been in the top five hottest on record. The last 5 years have been the hottest 5 years ever recorded, and 20 of the last 22 years have been the hottest ever recorded.

This is not a drill; this is an emergency, and it is an emergency that has an answer in deploying wind and solar and new batteries and all-electric vehicles and energy efficiency and investing in new technologies that can accelerate the solution even more. It is all there for us to do.

Right now, we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Apollo mission to the Moon. President Kennedy felt there was an existential threat to our planet that the Soviet Union was posing. He actually said at Rice University that he knew we were behind. The Russians had already sent up Sputnik. The Russians had already sent up Yuri Gagarin. He said we were behind but that we would not be behind by the end of the decade. He made it quite clear that we would have to invent metals that did not exist, invent alloys that did not exist, invent propulsion systems that did not exist; that we would have to return from the mission from the Moon through heat that was half the intensity of the Sun and that we would have to do so within a decade so we would control that existential threat.

The U.N. scientists and our scientists have each now said that climate change poses an existential threat to our planet—not ours, not Senator WHITEHOUSE's and mine. Those are the words of the scientists of the planet and our own scientists.

So we have to respond in the same way that President Kennedy asked our Nation to respond back in the 1960s. And the young people in our country—they are ready to go. They are ready to do whatever is necessary. But in order to do so, it is going to require us to take the kinds of actions that are necessary.

The U.N. special report said that if emissions are not cut by 100 percent by 2050, climate change will lead to natural disasters costing \$54 trillion over the next 80 years.

A lot of people say: Can we afford to take on this challenge? What our scientists are saying is that we can't afford not to take on this challenge. We can't afford that kind of a price when we can create millions of jobs saving the planet in wind and solar and new all-electric vehicles and buildings, technologies, energy efficiency. We can save all of creation by engaging in massive job creation. It is all there for us.

We just did it with the telecommunications revolution. We moved from black, rotary dial phones to the young people who are here in the well of the Senate here today—they have iPhones that they walk around with. Those iPhones have more computing power than the computers on the Apollo mission. How did we do that? We are Americans. We take on these challenges, and we revolutionized the telecommunications industry to move from the black, rotary dial phone. And these young people don't even know what that is.

We have moved from having no fax machines in our country 40 years ago to today. There are no fax machines in America. That is how quick the revolution goes when you put a plan together to accomplish it.

Well, the same thing is true in the clean energy sector, and what Senator WHITEHOUSE has been leading us on is this explication to the Senate that we can do it. You can't let the special interests dictate it, though. You can't let the dark money control it. That is his lecture to us, that it is incredibly important for us to ignore it. In the same way we ignored the monopolies in telecommunications, we have to ignore the monopolies and the duopolies that exist in the energy sector as well.

So I thank the Senator from Rhode Island again, and I will repeatedly do so because he will reach 300 speeches out here on the floor and 500 speeches out here on the floor. You might as well put an infinity sign behind the number because that is how many speeches he will give out here on the Senate floor to wake up this institution. That day is going to come, and I just wanted to come out here and

thank Senator WHITEHOUSE for his incredible leadership and to let him know that I am honored to be his partner in this effort.

I will be by your side the entire time it takes for us to get a solution for the young people in our country that they deserve and they expect from this institution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Madam President, may I propose to my wonderful colleague, the Senator from Massachusetts, that the Good Lord forbid that I have to get to 500 such speeches before we solve this problem.

Mr. MARKEY. The Good Lord and MITCH MCCONNELL.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. I would note that if we look back to 2009, there are some very important signs of optimism.

On the legislative side, Senator MARKEY—then-Representative Markey with his colleague Representative Waxman—successfully ushered, with significant industry and popular support, a serious climate bill through the House of Representatives, proving that it can be done, proving that real climate legislation can pass in this body.

In that same year, in 2009, a gentleman named Donald Trump—the same Donald Trump who is President now at the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue in the White House—took out an advertisement in the New York Times, and in his advertisement, Donald Trump and his children—Donald, Eric, and Ivanka—as well as the Trump Organization, all said that the science of climate change was incontrovertible. They further said that if we did not act, the consequences of climate change would be catastrophic and irreversible.

So we have the living experience of legislation passing, led by then-Representative Markey and Representative Waxman, and all we need, really, is to bring back that 2009 Donald Trump. Come on back, buddy. We want you because you were right in 2009.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Madam President, you know, Massachusetts is the Bay State, and Rhode Island is the Ocean State.

Back 240 or so years ago, Paul Revere got on his horse, and he started riding, warning of great danger. From my perspective, SHELDON WHITEHOUSE is a latter-day Paul Revere, and he is warning that the climate crisis is coming and that it is going to be much worse than it is today.

So from my perspective, this latter-day Paul Revere, who is SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, represents the best of New England and the best of our country and the best of our planet because we have to be all in this together, and we can't be leaders by sitting on the sidelines, which is where Donald Trump wants to have us. The Indians, the Chinese, and others—they won't

listen to us. You cannot preach temperance from a barstool. You can't tell the rest of the world to do something while you have a cigar in one hand and a beer in the other. That is where we are now with pollution under President Trump.

We have to be leaders, not laggards. That is what SHELDON WHITEHOUSE is all about. That is why it is my great honor to be up here with him, and for as long as it takes, he will be out here.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRAMER). The majority leader.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—VETO

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the veto messages on S. J. Res. 36, 37, and 38 be considered as having been read en bloc, that they be printed in the RECORD and spread in full upon the Journal en bloc.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the veto message with respect to S. J. Res. 36, S. J. Res. 37, and S. J. Res. 38 be considered at a time to be determined by the majority leader in consultation with the Democratic leader prior to August 2; that they be debated concurrently for up to 2 hours, with 15 minutes reserved for the chairman and ranking member, respectively; that the Senate vote on passage of the joint resolutions, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding, in the order listed; and, finally, that the unanimous consent order of June 19 for the remaining joint resolutions of disapproval of arms sales remain in effect.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Oklahoma.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. President, in April of this year, Border Patrol agents in South Texas, in McAllen—one of the most crossed areas for illegal traffic in the entire southern border—saw a group of individuals walking north who had already crossed the border, and they broke and ran. They assumed these individuals were illegally present in the United States, and they started moving to try to interdict them. They searched through a very large and very overgrown field.

I can tell you that that area is very, very rough terrain. It is very isolating, and the brush is exceptionally heavy. On a day in April, even in South Texas, it is extremely hot.

As they searched through the field looking for individuals, they happened to hear a child crying in their search. They encountered a 3-year-old boy who had been abandoned by the human smugglers when they broke and ran. This young boy, 3 years old, had these shoes on, and on his shoes were written

a name and a phone number across them. That is the only identifying thing they have. They tested the phone number, by the way, and the phone number didn't work.

Those human smugglers—moving people into the United States, using children as the vehicle—are prone to just cast that child aside if they slow them down.

The Border Patrol agents who encountered this child wearing those shoes, took him back to the office. Those Border Patrol agents personally bought him new clothing. The fellow agents entertained him. You can see him playing PAW Patrol back in the station. They spent time comforting him and trying to figure out who he was and where he was from. Border Patrol agents alternated taking care of him, personally buying supplies for him until they can transition him into Health and Human Services' care. That is what is really happening on the border every single day.

Border Patrol agents are dealing with children that cartels are using to move adults into the United States. Yes, there are some family units who are moving in, but every single family unit that moves into the United States is being ushered in by a cartel that works the border, and they are choosing the time and the place to move those individuals.

These officers are risking their lives every single day. They are working with families every single day to try to figure out who is a family unit and who is a child that is just being smuggled to be used as a vehicle to get across the border and how to separate the two. Then, once they identify the child, they try to figure out this: What do we do now with this child that we have? Where are you from?

Several months ago, most of the children who were moving across were 10, 11, and 12 years old, and they could interview those children. The cartels have figured that out now, and they are sending more and more children who are infants, 1, 2, and 3 years old, who don't know where they are from and don't know their names or their background or any other details. It is becoming more and more difficult for the Border Patrol agents to figure this out.

In fact, Border Patrol agents just like this are now actually bringing their own car seats or finding other people from their churches and other places that would donate car seats because when HHS needs to transport them out of a bus, they don't have car seats there. So they are paying for car seats to help some of these abandoned children be able to get to a place of safety.

These are the folks who are being criticized. These are the folks who some of my colleagues, even as recently as this week, said they need to get 40 hours of sensitivity training because they are so insensitive to what is happening on the border. These are the folks putting their own personal fi-

nances and their lives on the line and who are working every day to solve some of the problems that we have.

For the past several years, there have been disagreements on the solutions and wide disagreements on Federal law enforcement and what they are doing along the border. There have been a lot of folks casting blame on Federal law enforcement and on the President, instead of actually trying to figure out what the problem is at the border. Why is this happening? Why have our numbers so rapidly accelerated?

This past weekend, I visited the border with some of my colleagues. I went with Senator JONI ERNST of Iowa and Dr. BILL CASSIDY of Louisiana. We went to the Rio Grande Valley Sector. That area of the border is a thin slice of the border between the United States and Mexico, but in that area, in that one zone, 40 percent of all illegal traffic moves across the border. The most heavily trafficked area of that zone is the McAllen Sector, and that is where we went.

Across that one area, in that one small segment of the border, they have between 1,500 and 2,000 individuals illegally crossing the border every single day. That is one small sector of a 2,000-mile-long border. Just this year, in that one small sector, they have had individuals from 63 different countries cross the border illegally—63 different countries.

I hear a lot of folks say: It is all people from Central America who are crossing across the border to flee. That is not true. There are 63 countries just this year, just around McAllen, TX, not including the whole rest of the border.

You see, the cartels sort individuals by country and by background. They send Indians in one direction. They send Pakistanis in another direction. They send individuals from Bangladesh in another direction. They send folks from Honduras and Guatemala in another direction.

When I walked into one of the five stations that we visited all through that area this weekend, just to do a quick pop-in to see who was there at that moment, half of the adults who were there—these were single adults—were there from Venezuela and half of them were from Cuba, because that is how the cartels sort individuals.

Just in that one station in McAllen, we have had individuals from Pakistan, Yemen, China, Venezuela, Bangladesh, and Syria, in addition to many countries from Africa and Asia, and obviously much of Central America as well. Those individuals are moving across the border in very high numbers. Ninety percent of the apprehensions that have happened this year—90 percent—have been from countries other than Mexico.

Just as recently as 2014, only 1 percent of men who crossed the border had a child with them. Now the number is 50 percent of the men crossing the border have a child with them—50 percent.

The numbers have dramatically changed, and what is happening along our border is significant.

The men and women who are actually working every single day to protect what is happening at the border are also processing trade that is happening. These same individuals are processing 650,000 trucks coming into this area, 2.2 million pedestrians, and 9.3 million passengers coming across in different personal vehicles. There is a lot going on. So when I went down to the border this weekend and visited the five different facilities and then spent much of the evening and deep into the night riding along with Border Patrol, where one set of agents switched vehicles to go with a separate set of agents to ride along through the border just to get a feel for what was happening, what I experienced was exceptionally painful. What I saw were places that were crowded, spartan situations, and in my mind it echoed that for months the administration and the committee that I serve on—members of the Homeland Security Committee—have said for months that there is a humanitarian crisis on this border. But it didn't seem that anyone was listening until recently, as if all of this had been created recently.

Now, suddenly, people are turning their attention to what is happening along this border and saying that there is a serious humanitarian problem. And we said: Welcome to the dialogue because we have been saying it for months.

Cartels are making millions and millions of dollars exploiting children. They are smuggling children and families across the border. It now costs \$8,000 to cross a single individual cross the border. You pay a toll to the cartels, both to the traffickers and smugglers who are moving people—that \$8,000 and, then, an additional fee to actually physically cross the border at the time of the cartel's choosing in that area. But if you bring a child with you, it is half price. It is \$4,000. The incentive now is that it is cheaper to cross this area if you bring a child because the cartel knows they don't have to sneak you over the wall. All they have to do is get you to the border and drop you off.

We watched as a family unit and a group of families were sent in one direction and Border Patrol interdicted them, and then a mile away, three single adults made a sprint for the border. They went to the wall with a makeshift ladder and started working their way up the ladder, but because it took extra time for them to do that, Border Patrol was able to get to their location, interdict, and arrest them.

Cartels time it to move a set of families one direction to get all the Border Patrol gathered around them to hopefully sneak in people who most likely have a criminal record who can't just go through the normal system. They can't just match up a family with them. They have to move them sepa-

ately and, at the same time, moving large quantities of drugs across the border not far away from there.

On the date I was there, this picture was taken along the border not far from where I was. This was taken at 3 o'clock in the afternoon with a group of four individuals carrying large bags and boxes across the border. Now, I can't tell you for certain what is in those, but I have a pretty good guess that at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, four individuals bringing almost identical bundles across the border, it is a pretty good guess those are drugs.

This still photo that was snapped at 3 o'clock in the afternoon during a weekend was a reminder again of exactly what is happening at the border. As cartels line up, families go this direction, single individuals with a criminal record go this direction, and then we move drugs a different direction to see if we can't work our way through it.

Why is this happening? This is happening because Customs and Border Protection is spending all their time on humanitarian work now. Now 60 percent of the work of each individual agent is spent on humanitarian work processing families. They are doing the work; they are engaged in the process; and they are committed to taking care of people.

When 60 percent are in town taking care of the humanitarian work, that leaves only 40 percent to patrol the border. Where there used to be literally 60 people who would travel in this region of the border, now there are 20 to cover all of those miles. The cartels know it. So the more they can send families up through this section and the more they can cause chaos inside, the greater likelihood they can move drugs across the border freely.

How does this happen? This happens because the cartels can work to get a message to Central America and say: We have a way to get you into the United States, and we can get you in quickly. Bring a child with you—you pay them \$8,000 or \$4,000 if you bring a child—and we will work you up. They make promises to them of what will happen. Many of these people are from high poverty areas of Central America, and they will work them toward the border and drop them off at that spot.

It costs even more if you are not from Central America. Some Chinese individuals who have been moved across our border paid as much as \$30,000 to the cartels—\$30,000 to pay the price to move them through Mexico and then cross the border at a time of their choosing.

This is something that is making a tremendous amount of money for the cartels, and if we don't engage on solving this issue, we are allowing it. We need to realize our laws are broken. They are not only broken for immigration and what is happening, they are also not only breaking our hearts for what is happening with the humanitarian crisis and what is actually oc-

curing, but it is becoming a critical issue that we have to respond to, and we should.

Let me show you this next shot. This is what it looks like now along the border. As I traveled through the different locations to see what was happening in the five different locations, some of them are gut-wrenching and difficult because for the Border Patrol, they are a police station, basically, along the border.

Border Patrol—they don't do detention. When you go to a police station—and I hope you only go legally to a police station—but when you go to a police station, they are not there to hold people. They are there to write up all the reports. They are there to go through processing, but they are not set up to hold people for long periods of time. That is not what a police station does.

Border Patrol stations are like police stations along the border. They are really offices, and they manage that, but now they have also become places where they have to hold children and adults by the thousands. Thousands of people are crossing the border, and they are trying to figure out how to manage it. Some of the facilities are exceptionally overcrowded.

There is a facility that many people have seen the pictures of. They effectively call it the "kids in cages" facility. I will tell you more about that in a little bit. That location was designed for 1,500 people total. It had 1,590 the day I was there. It has had as many as 3,000 in that facility, though, within the last couple of months. It is miserably overcrowded. There are people packed in together. Those individuals are getting meals, showers, toilets, access to supplies, and snacks. All the basics are being provided. The Border Patrol is trying to figure out how they manage this many people when none of them were trained on how to detain people because that is not their task.

Border Patrol has now set up this facility called a soft-sided facility, where they have moved 1,000 family units away from that larger, what they call the central processing facility. They moved it away from the central processing facility a few miles away, and they set up a massive series of tents—air-conditioned and a lot more space. This happens to be in one of those where it was actually teenage boys in this particular area.

This is what detention looks like now along the border. They are sitting there watching, actually, "Puss n Boots" on the TV. There are people lying around and getting a chance to get some space, recreation space, and plenty of activity that is going on there. This is what Border Patrol is currently doing to try to manage it.

What does that look like, and how will things work? When you check in at the Border Patrol station, wherever it may be, whether it is in the central processing facility that is so overcrowded or whether it is out at the

soft-sided facility, when you get there, the first thing they do is they actually swap clothes with you. They have clothes they bought with their budgets. They allow you to pick different types of clothes to wear. The Border Patrol and their families take the clothes to those individual migrants. They have washing machines there set up, and they will personally wash all their clothes for them while they get a shower and they get cleaned up because many of these folks have not showered and cleaned up for a month.

So the first step is, they help them get all cleaned up and put fresh clothes on, a fresh shower, and hot meals. They have hot meals every single day. They also have snacks and supplies. This is, again, in that same soft-sided facility. This is just one of their supply rooms where you get a feel for snacks and drinks and water and toiletries. Back over in this area are large quantities of hygiene products and clothes—all kinds of things that are all piled up that they have gathered to help take care of individuals.

One of the things I heard so many times is, these kids can't even brush their teeth because Americans are so mean and because the Border Patrol is so ruthless to them. I went to five different facilities, and in every facility, I asked to see their supply room. In every facility, I saw these. That looks like toothbrushes to me. In fact, in the central processing facility that has had so much attention in the media, I asked the director there, and they said they actually have had 87,000 toothbrushes there. There has always been toothbrushes and toothpaste. There has always been soap and water and ways to clean up.

The challenge is, some of these folks come from very remote villages, and guess what, they are not used to brushing their teeth every day. That is not a normal hygiene habit for some people in some places they come from. So when the media comes to them and says: Have you brushed your teeth today, and they say no, it is not because they didn't have a toothbrush available. It is because, no, they didn't brush their teeth today.

I actually watched an interview where they went to a child and said: Have you brushed your teeth, and they said no. Their response on Twitter was: How atrocious. We are better than this as Americans. Well, this was what was in the storeroom and what they have been offered.

Interestingly enough, even as I walked through the central processing facility that is way overcrowded, I saw people lined up at the sinks brushing their teeth. We are providing supplies and resources to these individuals. That is a normal habit.

This was interesting to me. As I walked through the facility—and this was in that central processing facility that was so crowded. As I walked through, there was a Coast Guard individual here because, yes, the Coast

Guard is coming to help the Border Patrol because they need additional manpower. This is a Coastie who was coming through the facility that found a young girl who was just crying on her own. She was alone—one of these kids who has just been dropped off. He was walking through the facility, walking her around, holding her while she cried, and they had just stopped for a moment to watch TV. This is what is actually going on at the border.

Now, are there facilities that are overcrowded? Absolutely there are, and the people who struggle with that the most are actually members of the Border Patrol, and they have been exceptionally frustrated that they are not getting more support and more ability to transition people out of their facilities into actual detention facilities.

You see, the famous “kids in cages” facility that President Trump has taken so much heat for is actually a facility in McAllen, TX, they call the central processing facility. It was stood up in 2014 and 2015 when President Obama was facing a rush of children coming across the border with no place to put them. So President Obama's team, Jeh Johnson, as the Secretary of DHS, built a facility in McAllen to hold children there. That is the facility President Obama is getting blamed for—I am sorry, President Trump is getting blamed for—that President Obama and his team actually designed and built.

Now, is it a great facility for children? No, I don't think it is, nor is it the Border Patrol's fault, though, that it is a bad facility. They are using what they have to manage the crisis that is happening in front of them.

I am tired of hearing people say President Trump is trying to throw all these kids out and treat them so miserably, when that is not the case. They are scrambling to figure out what they can do and how they can manage and take care of the kids and the families they have and how they can sort out and try to figure out what to do.

So let me talk through the solutions here. How do we solve this crisis that is going on currently with thousands and thousands of people who are illegally crossing the border every day?

Well, some of them, we can start getting the message out, which has already happened, that America is open to immigration if you do it legally. We have 1.1 billion people who go through the legal permanent residence process every single year. We have 700,000 people every single year who become citizens of the United States through a naturalized system. We have 500,000 people every day who legally cross the border from Mexico into the United States. Half a million every day legally do it.

One of the places I stopped to see was the legal border crossings at the international bridge, and I watched individuals drive in and show their papers and go through the simple process. They show a passport, show their visa, what-

ever it may be, and drive across the border. Thousands of people line up to do it and millions a year in each facility.

I watched as people crossed the border on a pedestrian bridge, and as they crossed it with their paperwork, they were brought in. As they walk up to the bridge, they say: “I am asking for asylum.” They walk across the border on the international bridge and are taken into an air-conditioned room to start processing their asylum request. That is happening every day right now.

Yet everyone in the media is saying that is not happening. The first thing we can do is start getting out accurate information of what is actually occurring at the border.

The second thing we can do is—one of the primary issues the Border Patrol asked for over and over again, fund ICE. Now, why would the Border Patrol ask for more funding for somebody else? Because ICE is the primary entity that actually does detention. Border Patrol is the police station. ICE does detention.

When individuals are picked up at the border by Border Patrol, they are processed and immediately delivered to ICE. ICE then does detention for those individuals. They have facilities scattered all over the country where they can house individuals in consistent housing, with plenty of space and set up perfectly for that with well-trained individuals to detain folks to go through that process.

Border Patrol's No. 1 request is: Please stop asking us to do detention. We don't have facilities for it. Clearly, that is why everyone is packed in. Allow ICE to do this.

Now, why doesn't ICE have funding? Well, because it has been one of our biggest battles with our Democratic colleagues who are obsessed with defunding ICE. Over and over again they say they want to abolish ICE, defund ICE, and get rid of ICE. What is really being stated there is there is no place to do detention when that occurs.

Let me give you an example. In 2018, the request for ICE was \$3.6 billion. Actually, what we could get at the end of it was just over \$3 billion. They were \$600 million down from what they said they needed. In 2019, the request was \$3.5 billion. What they got was \$3.1 billion—again, much less than what they needed.

When the crisis began to hit in its highest proportion and we finally got a humanitarian relief package to these individuals on the border to try to get additional support, including building the soft-sided facility, my Democratic colleagues held out and refused to do any funding for ICE. In the humanitarian package, there was zero funding for ICE detention—none.

Border Patrol said that is the prime thing we need to actually solve this problem. What we need, more than anything else, is to allow these folks to move out of these temporary facilities

into long-term facilities so we can actually get them in better housing situations, but when we debated our way through this, our Democratic colleagues held firm and said: No funding for ICE detention. That perpetuates this problem on the border.

We have to solve this. They should be able to have the additional funding that they need so that we can get these kids and families into better locations for their housing and not temporary, stopgap locations.

The next issue we need to address is, we should move asylum officers to the border. This is one of the prime things that Border Patrol wanted. Many of these individuals come and say: I want asylum. Let's walk them through the process. Let's get there. The problem is that the vast majority of individuals who request asylum do not qualify for asylum. They come into the United States because they want to connect with family members who are here or for economic or other opportunities. I completely understand that. We have a legal process to do that. But someone can't just come across the border and say: I have a cousin who lives here and I want to come, and that qualifies as asylum. That is not asylum. Only 15 percent of the people crossing the border who are asking for asylum actually qualify, but individuals wait up to 2 years for a hearing to find out if they qualify. So the legitimate individuals who desperately need asylum, who have to get through that process as rapidly as they can, cannot do so because 85 percent of the people are clogging up the system, asking for things that are not asylum.

We should move asylum officers closer to the border to do faster processing so we can help individuals who are seeking asylum to get it and also identify people who are gaming the system and say: You cannot just game the system. You have to go through the process legally.

Additionally, we have to deal with this 20-day release issue. Right now, the rule is that a family with a child or a child can only be held for 20 days total. They can be held for only 20 days, and after that, they have to be released into the country. The cartels and human smugglers know that rule, and that is why we have seen an increase from 2014 from only 1 percent of the men bringing a child to now 50 percent of the men bringing a child, because they know that if they bring a child, they will be released within 20 days.

Here is what is different, though. In 20 days, we can do our record checks in the United States to see whether this person has a criminal record, but when we contact any of the 63 other countries that these individuals are coming from, just in that sector, most of those countries can't respond to us with their country's criminal record within 20 days.

What is really happening on the border is individuals are coming across

with a child. They are being detained for 20 days while we request criminal records from their home country. They are still there when on the 21st day we have to release them, and 10 to 15 days later, we get word that the individual actually had a murder warrant in their home country. That really happened just a few days ago.

Also, a few days ago, we released an adult with a child and then found out a few days later that their home country was seeking them because they were a pedophile in their country. But we had just released that adult with a child into our country because we have a 20-day restriction and we can't wait until we get criminal records from another country. That is absurd.

We are encouraging the trafficking of children by saying that you can get into our country no matter what if you just bring a child, and we are encouraging people with a criminal record to come in and bring a child because they know that is their fast track to be able to get in, because their home country can't fulfill our request fast enough. Why would we do that as a country? Why would we knowingly, willingly do that?

We can solve this problem. It is a horrible humanitarian crisis. We need to pay attention to it and be logical about this. Stop saying "abolish ICE" when what we really need is the ICE facilities to help us to detain people in the best possible of environments while we find out who they are, what their records are, who is related to whom, and what their background is.

Stop ignoring the obvious things. We have some people coming due to poverty. We have some people coming to smuggle drugs. Until we can sort that out, we should figure out who is who. That doesn't seem irrational to me.

We should also find a way to process asylum requests faster than we are so that individuals pursuing asylum can go through the system and get processed and individuals who are gaming the system do not get to game the system.

We can do better, and we have to do better. I would encourage us to be serious about immigration in the days ahead. This Congress can solve this issue, but it won't because it is just a political game. When it is about scoring political points rather than solving a humanitarian crisis, people in this body have to decide which one they want to do more.

I will never forget last year, sitting with a bipartisan group of my colleagues, and as we discussed solutions to immigration, one of my Democratic colleagues said out loud: I haven't decided what I want to do on this yet. There is an angel on one shoulder saying this problem needs to be solved, and there is a devil on my other shoulder saying this is the greatest political weapon I have against the President. Why would I give that up? And I haven't decided which way I am going to go yet.

I looked at them and said: Here is a basic rule of thumb I live by. When there are an angel and a devil talking to you, go with the angel every time.

This is something we should do, and we should stop playing political games and trying to hurt the President and ignoring the obvious solution we all should see. This is not a partisan issue; this is a humanity issue. Let's solve it together.

With that, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED TRANSFER TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN, AND THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC OF CERTAIN DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES—S. J. RES. 36—VETO

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED EXPORT TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, AND THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE OF CERTAIN DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES—S. J. RES. 37—VETO

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED EXPORT TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND OF CERTAIN DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES—S. J. RES. 38—VETO

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate having received the veto messages on S.J. Res. 36, S.J. Res. 37, and S.J. Res. 38, the messages are considered read and spread upon the Journal in full, en bloc.

The veto messages are ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S.J. Res. 36, a joint resolution that would prohibit the issuance of certain licenses with respect to several proposed agreements or transfers to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Kingdom of

Spain, and the Italian Republic. This resolution would weaken America's global competitiveness and damage the important relationships we share with our allies and partners.

In particular, S.J. Res. 36 would prohibit licensing for manufacturing in Saudi Arabia of Guidance Electronics Detector Assemblies, Computer Control Groups, Airfoil Groups, Aircraft Umbilical Interconnect Systems, Fuses, and other components to support the production of Paveway II, Enhanced Paveway II, and Paveway IV munitions. The misguided licensing prohibitions in the joint resolution directly conflict with the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States, which include strengthening defense alliances with friendly countries throughout the world, deepening partnerships that preserve and extend our global influence, and enhancing our competitiveness in key markets. Apart from negatively affecting our bilateral relationships with Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, Spain, and Italy, the joint resolution would hamper the ability of the United States to sustain and shape critical security cooperation activities. S.J. Res. 36 would also damage the credibility of the United States as a reliable partner by signaling that we are willing to abandon our partners and allies at the very moment when threats to them are increasing.

The United States is providing the licenses that the joint resolution seeks to prohibit for many reasons. First and foremost, it is our solemn duty to protect the safety of the more than 80,000 United States citizens who reside in Saudi Arabia and who are imperiled by Houthi attacks from Yemen. The Houthis, supported by Iran, have attacked civilian and military facilities using missiles, armed drones, and explosive boats, including in areas frequented by United States citizens, such as the airport in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Second, the joint resolution would degrade Saudi Arabia's military preparedness and ability to protect its sovereignty, directly affecting its ability to defend United States military personnel hosted there. Third, Saudi Arabia is a bulwark against the malign activities of Iran and its proxies in the region, and the licenses the joint resolution would prohibit enhance Saudi Arabia's ability to deter and defend against these threats.

In addition, S.J. Res. 36 would negatively affect our NATO Allies and the transatlantic defense industry. It could, for example, produce unintended consequences for defense procurement and interoperability with and between our partners. It could also create diplomatic and security opportunities for our adversaries to exploit.

Finally, by restricting the ability of our partners to produce and purchase precision-guided munitions, S.J. Res. 36 would likely prolong the conflict in Yemen and deepen the suffering it causes. By undermining bilateral rela-

tionships of the United States and impeding our ability to support key partners at a critical time, the joint resolution would harm—not help—efforts to end the conflict in Yemen. And without precision-guided munitions, more—not fewer—civilians are likely to become casualties of the conflict. While I share concerns that certain Members of Congress have expressed about civilian casualties of this conflict, the United States has taken and will continue to take action to minimize such casualties, including training and advising Saudi-led Coalition forces to improve their targeting processes.

The United States is very concerned about the conflict's toll on innocent civilians and is working to bring the conflict in Yemen to an end. But we cannot end it through ill-conceived and time-consuming resolutions that fail to address its root causes. Rather than expend time and resources on such resolutions, I encourage the Congress to direct its efforts toward supporting our work to achieve peace through a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Yemen.

For these reasons, it is my duty to return S.J. Res. 36 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, July 24, 2019.

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S.J. Res. 37, a joint resolution that would prohibit the issuance of export licenses for certain defense articles, defense services, and technical data to support the transfer of Paveway II kits to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Republic of France. This resolution would weaken America's global competitiveness and damage the important relationships we share with our allies and partners.

In particular, S.J. Res. 37 would prohibit the issuance of export licenses for Paveway II kits to the UAE, the United Kingdom, and France. The misguided licensing prohibitions in the joint resolution directly conflict with the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States, which include strengthening defense alliances with friendly countries throughout the world, deepening partnerships that preserve and extend our global influence, and enhancing our competitiveness in key markets. Apart from negatively affecting our bilateral relationships with the UAE, the United Kingdom, and France, the joint resolution would hamper the ability of the United States to sustain and shape critical security cooperation activities with those partners. S.J. Res. 37 would also damage the credibility of the United States as a reliable partner by signaling that we are willing to abandon our partners and allies at the very moment when threats to them are increasing.

The United States is providing the licenses that the joint resolution seeks

to prohibit for many reasons. First and foremost, it is our solemn duty to protect the safety of the more than 80,000 United States citizens who reside in Saudi Arabia and are imperiled by Houthis attacking from Yemen using missiles, armed drones, and explosive boats. The UAE is an important part of the Saudi-led Coalition that helps protect Americans from these Iranian-supported Houthi attacks on civilian and military facilities, including those located in areas frequented by United States citizens like the airport in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Second, the joint resolution would degrade the UAE's military preparedness and ability to protect its sovereignty, directly affecting its ability to defend the thousands of United States military personnel hosted there. Third, the UAE is a bulwark against the malign activities of Iran and its proxies in the region. It is also an active partner with the United States in combatting terrorism in Yemen and elsewhere. The licenses the joint resolution would prohibit enhance our partner's ability to deter and defend against these threats.

In addition, S.J. Res. 37 would negatively affect our NATO Allies and the transatlantic defense industry. It could, for example, produce unintended consequences for defense procurement and interoperability with and between our partners. It could also create diplomatic and security opportunities for our adversaries to exploit.

Finally, by restricting the ability of our partners to produce and purchase precision-guided munitions, S.J. Res. 37 would likely prolong the conflict in Yemen and deepen the suffering it causes. By undermining bilateral relationships of the United States and impeding our ability to support key partners at a critical time, the joint resolution would harm—not help—efforts to end the conflict in Yemen. And without precision-guided munitions, more—not fewer—civilians are likely to become casualties of the conflict. While I share concerns that certain Members of Congress have expressed about civilian casualties of this conflict, the United States has taken and will continue to take action to minimize such casualties, including training and advising the Saudi-led Coalition forces to improve their targeting processes.

The United States is very concerned about the conflict's toll on innocent civilians and is working to bring the conflict in Yemen to an end. But we cannot end it through ill-conceived and time-consuming resolutions that fail to address its root causes. Rather than expend time and resources on such resolutions, I encourage the Congress to direct its efforts toward supporting our work to achieve peace through a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Yemen.

For these reasons, it is my duty to return S.J. Res. 37 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, July 24, 2019.

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S.J. Res. 38, a joint resolution that would prohibit the issuance of export licenses for the proposed transfer of defense articles, defense services, and technical data to support the manufacture of the Aurora Fuzing System for the Paveway IV Precision Guided Bomb Program in regard to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This resolution would weaken America's global competitiveness and damage the important relationships we share with our allies and partners.

In particular, S.J. Res. 38 would prohibit the issuance of export licenses for the proposed transfer of defense articles, defense services, and technical data for the manufacturing of the Aurora Fuzing System for the Paveway IV Precision Guided Bomb Program. The misguided licensing prohibition in the joint resolution directly conflicts with the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States, which include strengthening defense alliances with friendly countries throughout the world, deepening partnerships that preserve and extend our global influence, and enhancing our competitiveness in key markets. Apart from negatively affecting our bilateral relationships with Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom, the joint resolution would hamper the ability of the United States to sustain and shape critical security cooperation activities. S.J. Res. 38 would also damage the credibility of the United States as a reliable partner by signaling that we are willing to abandon our partners and allies at the very moment when threats to them are increasing.

The United States is providing the licenses that the joint resolution seeks to prohibit for many reasons. First and foremost, it is our solemn duty to protect the safety of the more than 80,000 United States citizens who reside in Saudi Arabia and who are imperiled by Houthi attacks from Yemen. The Houthis, supported by Iran, have attacked civilian and military facilities using missiles, armed drones, and explosive boats, including in areas frequented by United States citizens, such as the airport in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Second, the joint resolution would degrade Saudi Arabia's military preparedness and ability to protect its sovereignty, directly affecting its ability to defend United States military personnel hosted there. Third, Saudi Arabia is a bulwark against the malign activities of Iran and its proxies in the region, and the licenses the joint resolution would prohibit enhance Saudi Arabia's ability to deter and defend against these threats.

In addition, S.J. Res. 38 would negatively affect our NATO Allies and the transatlantic defense industry. It could, for example, produce unintended consequences for defense procurement and interoperability with and between

our partners. It could also create diplomatic and security opportunities for our adversaries to exploit.

Finally, by restricting the ability of our partners to produce and purchase precision-guided munitions, S.J. Res. 38 would likely prolong the conflict in Yemen and deepen the suffering it causes. By undermining bilateral relationships of the United States and impeding our ability to support key partners at a critical time, the joint resolution would harm—not help—efforts to end the conflict in Yemen. And without precision-guided munitions, more—not fewer—civilians are likely to become casualties of the conflict. While I share concerns that certain Members of Congress have expressed about civilian casualties of this conflict, the United States has taken and will continue to take action to minimize such casualties, including training and advising the Saudi-led Coalition forces to improve their targeting processes.

The United States is very concerned about the conflict's toll on innocent civilians and is working to bring the conflict in Yemen to an end. But we cannot end it through ill-conceived and time-consuming resolutions that fail to address its root causes. Rather than expend time and resources on such resolutions, I encourage the Congress to direct its efforts toward supporting our work to achieve peace through a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Yemen.

For these reasons, it is my duty to return S.J. Res. 38 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.

THE WHITE HOUSE, July 24, 2019.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 2242

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, in a moment, I will ask unanimous consent for the Senate to take up and pass legislation I have introduced to help protect our democracy from foreign interference.

Earlier today, Special Counsel Robert Mueller testified that the Russian Government's efforts to undermine our elections are "among the most serious challenges to our democracy"—a challenge he says that "deserves the attention of every American."

Mr. Mueller's testimony should serve as a warning to every Member of this body about what could happen in 2020—literally, in our next election—if we fail to act. When asked if he thought that Russia would attack our democracy again in 2020, Mr. Mueller said: "They're doing it as we sit here."

Think about that for a moment. The special prosecutor spent 2½ years looking into Russian intervention in our elections in 2016 and says not only are they going to do it, but they are doing it as we sit here.

If this were just coming from the special prosecutor, some folks might be

willing to dismiss it, but this is exactly the same message we heard earlier this week from FBI Director Wray. It is a message that all of us have heard, and being on the Intelligence Committee, I have heard repeatedly from Director of National Intelligence Coats, and we have heard this, as well, from other leaders of law enforcement and our intelligence community. Again, I point out that the leaders who have sounded the alarm about the ongoing Russian threat to our elections were all appointed by this President.

Unfortunately, in the nearly 3 years since we uncovered Russia's attack on our democracy, this body has not held a single vote on stand-alone legislation to protect our elections.

I am not here to relitigate the 2016 election or, for that matter, to second-guess the special counsel's findings. This is more a question of how we defend our democracy on a going-forward basis.

The reason we need to do this—amongst a host of reasons—is that just a month ago, the President of the United States sat in the Oval Office, and by dismissing this threat, effectively gave Russia the green light to interfere in future elections. Since then, unfortunately, my Republican colleagues have done nothing to prevent further future attempts at undermining our democracy.

Let me be clear. If a foreign adversary tries to offer assistance to your campaign, your response should not be thank you; your response should be a moral obligation to tell the FBI. Mr. Mueller, the former FBI Director and inarguably the straightest arrow in public service, said as much this afternoon.

So if the President or other members of his family or his campaign can't be trusted to do the right thing and report their foreign contacts and foreign offers of assistance to their political activities, then we need to make it a legal requirement.

That is what my legislation, the FIRE Act, is all about. The FIRE Act is a simple, narrowly targeted bill. All it does is make sure that attempts to interfere in future Presidential elections are promptly reported to the FBI and the FEC.

Let me be clear. The FIRE Act is not about prohibiting innocent contacts or the exercise of First Amendment rights. Contrary to some of the mistaken rhetoric we have heard, it does not require the reporting of contacts with foreign journalists or with Dreamers or of official meetings with foreign governments. It is simply about preserving Americans' trust in our democratic process. If a candidate is receiving or welcoming help from the Kremlin or its spy services, I think the American people should have a right to know before they head to the polls.

Consequently, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be discharged from further consideration of S. 2242, the FIRE

Act; that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. An objection is heard.

The Senator from Connecticut.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 1247

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I thank my colleague Senator WARNER, and we will hear shortly from Senator WYDEN.

These two great colleagues are championing election security. Senator WARNER, at the helm as vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee, has done as much as any American and any Member of this body to uncover the serious Russian threat to our election system. It is a threat not just from Russia but from other countries as well. That is why I have offered and will ask unanimous consent for the passage of S. 1247, the Duty To Report Act.

This legislation, like Senator WARNER's, is based on a very simple idea: If you see something, say something. The Duty To Report Act would require campaigns, candidates, and family members to immediately report to the FBI and the Federal Election Commission any offers of illegal foreign assistance. It differs in some technical aspects—for example, with regard to family members—from Senator WARNER's proposed FIRE Act. Yet it is the same idea because it codifies into law what is already a moral duty, a patriotic duty, and basic common sense. It is already illegal to accept foreign assistance during a campaign. It is already illegal to solicit foreign assistance during a campaign. All this bill does is require campaigns and individuals to report such illegal foreign assistance directly to the FBI.

Special Counsel Robert Mueller came before Congress today to answer questions about his very comprehensive and powerful report that documents the sweeping and systematic interference in our election, as he testified, to benefit, principally, Donald Trump's campaign. Yet this measure is about the future. It is about preventing such election interference in the future and providing a mandate and a duty to report any offers of assistance from a foreign government, like Russia.

This report outlines the most serious attack on our democracy by a foreign power in our history. It tells the story of more than 150 contacts between the Trump campaign and Russian agents. It tells the story of Russian covert and overt efforts to influence the outcome of our election by helping one candidate and hurting another, and it

shows—perhaps most importantly for the purpose of this measure—that the Trump campaign knew of it, welcomed it, and happily accepted it.

Mueller testified this morning:

Over the course of my career, I have seen a number of challenges to our democracy. The Russian Government's efforts to interfere in our election is among the most serious. As I said on May 29, this deserves the attention of every American.

Equally important is that, just yesterday, FBI Director Christopher Wray came before the Committee on the Judiciary and warned that the Russians are still actively trying to interfere in our election, which is what Mueller said today when he was asked about some of the remarks and some of the efforts in the Trump campaign. He was referring to Donald Trump, Jr., when he said, "I love it," in welcoming Russia's offer of assistance to the Trump campaign in the June 9 meeting, Director Mueller said, "I hope this is not the new normal, but I fear it is."

This is the context of troubling comments that brings us here today. One of the most troubling is President Trump's own comment when asked if he would accept foreign help in 2020, and he said, "I would take it." That is why we need the Duty To Report Act. If that kind of assistance is offered, there is an obligation to report it, not to take it.

The election of 2016 was simply a dress rehearsal. With the 2020 election upon us, we must stop this kind of foreign interference and ensure that it is the American people, not Russia or any other foreign power like China or Iran, who decide who the leaders of this country will be and the direction of our democracy.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be discharged from further consideration of S. 1247; that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. An objection is heard.

Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I yield to another great colleague who has been a champion of this cause of election security, Senator WYDEN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 890

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues, Senator BLUMENTHAL and Senator WARNER, who have spoken strongly on the issue at hand, which is to protect our great country and our extraordinary 200-year experiment in self-governance. To do it, we have to

add a new tier—a strong protection—for the sanctity of our elections.

I thank Senator BLUMENTHAL. He is a member of the Committee on the Judiciary, where he is doing important work on these issues. I thank my colleague, Senator WARNER, of course, who is the vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee, on which I serve. I also thank my colleague who is still on the floor, Senator BLUMENTHAL, for all of his leadership. I look forward to partnering with him and with Senator WARNER in the days ahead.

In a moment, I will ask for unanimous consent to adopt a bipartisan bill that I have proposed with Senator COTTON. It is S. 890, the Senate Cybersecurity Protection Act. Before I ask, however, for that unanimous consent request, I will give some brief background as to why Senator COTTON and I are working on this issue and putting all of this time into this effort.

In the 2016 election, obviously, the Russians inflicted damage on our democracy by hacking the personal accounts of political parties and individuals and then by dumping emails and documents online. This tactic generated massive amounts of media coverage that was based on those stolen documents. It is clear, in my view, that the Russians and other hostile foreign actors are going to continue to target the personal devices and accounts, which are often less secure than official government devices. You don't have to take my word for it. Top national security officials in the Trump administration have said virtually the same thing.

Last year, the Director of National Intelligence—our former colleague, Senator Coats—told the Senate Intelligence Committee: "The personal accounts and devices of government officials can contain information that is useful for our adversaries to target, either directly or indirectly, these officials and the organizations with which they are affiliated."

Likewise, in a letter to me last year, the then-Director of the National Security Agency, MIKE ROGERS, said that the personal devices and accounts belonging to senior U.S. government officials "remain prime targets for exploitation."

These foreign intelligence threats are not just aimed at the executive branch. Last year, a bipartisan Senate working group examined cybersecurity threats against Senators. In its November 2018 report, the working group revealed there was "mounting evidence that Senators are being targeted for hacking, which could include exposure of personal data." Likewise, Google has now publicly confirmed that it has quietly warned specific Senators and Senate staff that their personal email accounts were targeted by state-sponsored hackers.

Unfortunately, the Sergeant at Arms—the office that is tasked with protecting the Senate's cybersecurity—is currently barred from using its resources to protect the personal devices

and accounts of Senators and their staff, even if Senators and their staff are being targeted by foreign spies and hackers.

That is why, on a bipartisan basis, I and Senator COTTON, who also serves on the Intelligence Committee with me and with Senator WARNER, who spoke earlier, introduced legislation to permit the Sergeant at Arms to provide 100-percent voluntary cybersecurity assistance to Senators and their staff. Our bill is modeled after a provision in the recently passed Senate Intelligence Authorization bill, which permits the Director of National Intelligence to provide voluntary cyber help to protect the personal devices and accounts of intelligence community employees.

Fighting back against foreign interference means securing every aspect of our democracy, including the personal accounts and devices of elected officials. I feel strongly that the majority leader, our colleague from Kentucky, must stop blocking this commonsense legislation and allow this body to better defend itself against foreign hackers.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Rules and Administration be discharged from further consideration of S. 890, the Senate Cybersecurity Protection Act; that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration; that the bill be read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. An objection is heard.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I note again there has been an objection.

I would only state that I don't see how anyone could consider what I have proposed to be a partisan issue. I and our colleague from Arkansas, Senator COTTON—a military veteran—have joined in an effort, which I would just say to the Senators who are on the floor, is going to be one of the great threats of our time.

We know that hostile foreign actors are going to target the personal accounts and devices of government officials. Russia clearly demonstrated the opportunities for meddling in the last election. Now, we know that those opportunities are going to grow exponentially in the days and months ahead. So I only want to pass on that I think this is regrettable, and there has been an objection, and I just hope we will be able to pass this bill before more people are hacked and their stolen data is exploited by hostile foreign actors.

I yield the floor.

REMEMBERING EVA YEH CHANG

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I am sorry to note today the recent passing of a dear friend to many and the

ending of her quintessentially American story.

On July 13, Mrs. Eva Yeh Chang of San Francisco died peacefully at the age of 100. Eva was born in 1919 in Shanghai during a different era for China. Though she was born into a well-to-do banking family, her first three decades involved significant hardship: the Chinese Civil War, the Japanese occupation in the late 1930s, the Second World War, and the beginning of the Communist Revolution. That final event led Eva and her husband, Fu-Yun Chang, a Harvard-educated diplomat, statesman, and scholar, to leave their lives behind and depart for American shores. They essentially started over in a new country with three young children under the age of 10.

What followed was the kind of entrepreneurial “start-up life” that would sound impossible in many other lands but has been the building block of our Nation from the beginning. Eva worked multiple jobs, from retail to waiting tables. Eventually, she saved enough to strike out on her own. First she opened a diner. Then she started one of San Francisco's early Northern Chinese restaurants—a big success—and then came more investments in enterprise and real estate in the city.

Eva didn't just keep what she had built for herself. She put it into service for others. Eva built a new life for her children. She became a pillar of her community, and she used her resources to help a number of her relatives back in China complete the same journey she had made and follow in her footsteps to America.

This remarkable woman may have left us, but the positive effects of her life continue to ripple out. For example, she lived to see her daughter, Ambassador Julia Chang Bloch, become the first-ever Asian-American to serve as a U.S. Ambassador and continue the family legacy of giving back to this Nation.

The Senate stands with the entire Chang family and all who mourn Eva in this time of grief, and we stand with them in celebrating 100 years so well lived.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

● Ms. HARRIS. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent but, had I been present, would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 226, the motion to invoke cloture on Wendy Williams Berger to be U.S. District Judge for the Middle District of Florida.

Mr. President: I was necessarily absent but, had I been present, would have voted no on rollcall vote No. 227, the motion to invoke cloture on Brian C. Buescher to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Nebraska.●

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN LEGION

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize the 100th anniversary

of the American Legion. I appreciate the opportunity to speak about this truly significant milestone in the history of our veterans and this organization. The centennial celebration is a historical benchmark for the State of Michigan, as well as the entire Nation.

Established in 1919 in Paris, France, the American Legion was founded to bolster the morale of American troops as they awaited their return home as recently discharged combat veterans following the Great War. In September of the same year, the American Legion was federally chartered by Congress. By November 1919, the American Legion had 2,500 paid members and hosted its first national convention in Indianapolis, which then became the permanent home of the American Legion National Headquarters.

With local posts in each State, various territories, and overseas, the American Legion is our Nation's largest wartime Veterans' service organization. The Legion embodies its commitment of upholding the Constitution of the United States of America and promoting peace and goodwill through its volunteerism in the communities it represents.

The Legion's grassroots involvement has shaped legislation at all levels of government. Within its inaugural year, Legionnaires across the country advocated for better conditions for disabled veterans in Washington, DC. Within a week, Congress passed the Sweet Bill which included provisions that would more than double the compensation disabled veterans were receiving at the time. In 1921, The American Legion claimed another legislative victory with the consolidation of three Federal agencies into the Veterans Bureau, which would later become the Veterans Administration.

The American Legion created various organizations to support the Nation's veterans and youth, including the Veterans and Children Foundation and Sons of the American Legion. Since its creation in 1924, the foundation has given over \$30 million in financial assistance for disabled veterans and military families. Through scholarships and programming, the Legion also invests in the future of our Nation's youth.

Today, with 386 posts in Michigan and more than 12,000 posts nationwide with nearly 2 million members, the American Legion continues to grow to support the needs of today's veterans. Whether it is drafting the first version of the GI Bill, organizing our flag code, or donating to the construction of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, the Legion has been at the forefront of monumental changes to our military and veterans policy and overall patriotism.

It is my great pleasure to congratulate the American Legion on the lasting impact it has made throughout our Nation's history and for the work it continues to do. As the American Legion celebrates this centennial milestone, I ask all my colleagues to join

me in congratulating its members its growth and prosperity in the years ahead.

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT MAJOR DANIEL A. DAILEY

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize SMA Daniel A. Dailey, the fifteenth Sergeant Major of the Army, SMA, for his extraordinary 30 years of faithful service to our Army and our Nation.

Sergeant Major Dailey's impressive and distinguished career has been characterized by his diligent work, compassionate leadership, and focus on taking care of and advocating to improve the lives of soldiers and their family members.

In the next few weeks, Sergeant Major Dailey will transition his responsibilities as the U.S. Army's senior enlisted leader, and he will retire from the army after a long and distinguished career of military service at home and abroad. While Sergeant Major Dailey may transition his official duties, his heart and soul is that of a soldier. I know that, as a Soldier for Life, Sergeant Major Dailey will continue his life's work to improve our Army and to take care of our soldiers.

A native of Palmerton, PA, Sergeant Major Dailey began his journey of service when he enlisted in the Army in 1989 and successfully completed basic training and advanced individual training as an infantryman at Fort Benning, GA. During his career, Sergeant Major Dailey has held every enlisted leadership position in the mechanized infantry, ranging from Bradley Fighting Vehicle commander to command sergeant major.

Sergeant Major Dailey has served with the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Infantry Divisions stateside and overseas. In March 2009, he was selected as the 4th Infantry Division command sergeant major, where he served as both the command sergeant major of Fort Carson, CO, and U.S. Division-North, Iraq. In 2011, Sergeant Major Dailey was selected to serve as the Command Sergeant Major of the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, TRADOC.

In addition to four deployments supporting Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and NEW DAWN, where he earned the Bronze Star with Valor for his leadership during the 4th Infantry Division's 2-month "Battle for Sadr City" in 2008, he also deployed in support of Operations DESERT STORM and DESERT SHIELD during the first Gulf War.

Sergeant Major Dailey's tenure as the 15th Sergeant Major of the Army began on January 30, 2015. As Sergeant Major of the Army, Sergeant Major Dailey serves as the senior enlisted advisor to the Army's Chief of Staff on all matters affecting enlisted soldiers and the NCO corps. In addition to being the soldier's voice through his membership on multiple councils, boards, and commissions and frequently testifying

before Congress, Sergeant Major Dailey has also traveled the world to hear and tell the soldier's story, spearheaded initiatives to enhance Army readiness and increase soldier opportunity, and routinely met with business and industry leaders, and State and local government officials to improve the quality of life for Soldiers and their families.

Sergeant Major Dailey is the public face of the U.S. Army's noncommissioned officer corps, representing the corps to the American people in the media and through business and community engagements. Sergeant Major Dailey is a shining example of Army values, and he exemplifies the noncommissioned officer's creed. He has remained technically and tactically proficient, and he has consistently provided outstanding leadership. He is the personification of what it means to be a professional soldier, and his service is an example of how the Army's NCO corps is the "Backbone of the Army."

It has been a pleasure to know, work, and serve with Sergeant Major Dailey during his time as the Sergeant Major of the Army. On behalf of a grateful Nation, it is my honor to recognize the selfless service and sacrifice of Sergeant Major Dailey and his family. I wish Sergeant Major Dailey and his family the very best in all of their future endeavors as he and they begins this new chapter. May God continue to bless Sergeant Major Dailey, his family, and the United States of America.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO GILLIAN AIKEN

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Gigi for her hard work as an intern in the Senate Republican Conference. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Gigi is a native of Virginia. She will attend the University of the South: Sewanee. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Gigi for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her journey.●

TRIBUTE TO MADISON ANDERSON

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Madison for her hard work as an intern in my Sheridan office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Madison is a native of Ten Sleep. She is a student at Sheridan College, where

she is studying agricultural business. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Madison for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

TRIBUTE TO JAYME CHANDLER

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Jayme for her hard work as an intern in the Environment and Public Works Committee. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Jayme is a native of California. She is a student at the University of California, Berkeley, where she is studying history. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Jayme for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her journey.●

TRIBUTE TO JACK CHIESA

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Al for his hard work as an intern in the Environment and Public Works Committee. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Al is a native of New Jersey. He is a student at the College of William and Mary. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Al for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his journey.●

TRIBUTE TO AVERY DOUGLAS

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Avery for her hard work as an intern in the Environment and Public Works Committee. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Avery is a native of Florida. She is a student at the University of South

Carolina School of Law. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Avery for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her journey.●

TRIBUTE TO PRESTON GROMER

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Preston for his hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC, office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Preston is a native of Casper. He is a student at Pepperdine University, where he is studying economics. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Preston for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his journey.●

TRIBUTE TO GARRETT HARTIGAN

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Garrett for his hard work as an intern in my Cheyenne office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Garrett is a native of Cheyenne. He is a student at the University of Wyoming, where he is studying agricultural business and pre-law. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Garrett for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his journey.●

TRIBUTE TO SKYLAR HOLMQUIST

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Skylar for her hard work as an intern in my Casper office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Skylar is a native of Baggs. She is a student at Casper College, where she is studying art education. She has dem-

onstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Skylar for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

TRIBUTE TO JACK HOLT

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Jack for his hard work as an intern in the Senate Republican Conference. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Jack is a native of Buffalo. He is a student at Colorado Mesa University, where he is studying history and business. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Jack for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his journey.●

TRIBUTE TO KAMERON JENSEN

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Kameron for his hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC, office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Kameron is a native of Cheyenne. He is a student at the University of Wyoming, where he is studying chemical engineering. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Kameron for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his journey.●

TRIBUTE TO KAITLYN MAHAR

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Kaitlyn for her hard work as an intern in the Senate Republican Conference. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Kaitlyn is a native of Colorado. She is a student at the University of Wyoming, where she is studying political

science and Spanish. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Kaitlyn for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her journey.●

TRIBUTE TO PATRICK MCLEAN

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Patrick for his hard work as an intern in the Environment and Public Works Committee. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Patrick is a native of South Carolina. He is a graduate of Wofford College, where he studied history. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Patrick for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his journey.●

TRIBUTE TO TREVOR MERRIFIELD

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Trevor for his hard work as an intern in the Environment and Public Works Committee. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Trevor is a native of North Carolina. He is a graduate of Auburn University, where he studied political science. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Trevor for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It is a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his journey.●

TRIBUTE TO CHANDLER PAULING

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Chandler for her hard work as an intern in my Washington, DC, office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Chandler is a native of Laramie. She is a student at the University of Wyoming, where she is studying political

science and communication. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Chandler for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

TRIBUTE TO BRIANNA SIMS

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Brianna for her hard work as an intern in my Casper office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Brianna is a native of Casper. She is a student at the University of Wyoming, where she is studying physiology. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Brianna for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

RECOGNIZING THE SPRINGDALE TYSON SCHOOL OF INNOVATION ROBOTICS TEAM

● Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate Root Negative One, Springdale's Don Tyson School of Innovation Robotics Team, on qualifying for the FIRST Global Challenge in Dubai. Arkansas is proud to have a team from our State represent the United States in the robotics competition in October.

Root Negative One has achieved much success in the team's 4-year history. It won the Inspire Award, the top award given at the FIRST Tech Challenge tournament, in its first year. During the 2017-2018 season, the team earned the Inspire Award at the Arkansas FIRST Tech Challenge Championship, and it was an Inspire Award Finalist at the FIRST Tech Challenge World Championship in Houston, TX. This past season, the team won the Inspire Awards at the Alabama FIRST Tech Challenge Championship and the FIRST Tech Challenge World Championship in Houston. This award recognizes Root Negative One as one of the top two teams worldwide.

For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology—FIRST—empowers students to develop skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—STEM—and provides opportunities for youth to make connections with professionals in these areas. University of Arkansas College of Engi-

neering professors Richard Cassady and Chase Rainwater volunteer as team coaches, serving as excellent mentors to the students. Since day one, the team has worked hard to build a world-class, high-school robotics program to compete at the most elite level.

The numerous benefits these Springdale students get from participating in the FIRST program will have a long lasting impact on team members. By having the opportunity to learn from professional engineers and master STEM skills before they enter college, they are well on their way to successful futures.

I am very proud of the team's accomplishments as its members continue their journey to develop such relevant, in-demand skills. Congratulations to Root Negative One Robotics Team on all of these accomplishments on earning a spot to compete in the FIRST Global Challenge. I wish the team the best of luck as it represents our country in the fall.●

TRIBUTE TO TIM MORGAN

● Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Tim Morgan, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all the hard work he has done on behalf of myself, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Tim is a graduate of Mitchell High School in Mitchell, SD. Currently, he is attending South Dakota State University in Brookings, SD, where he studies political science and journalism. Tim is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of his internship experience and has been a true asset to the office.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Tim for all of the fine work he has done and wish him continued success in the years to come.●

TRIBUTE TO ANNELIESE TAGGART

● Mr. ROUNDS. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Anneliese Taggart, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all the hard work she has done on behalf of myself, my staff, and the State of South Dakota.

Anneliese is a graduate of Vermillion High School in Vermillion, SD. Currently, she is attending the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, AL, where she studies political science and communications studies. Anneliese is a dedicated and diligent worker who has been devoted to getting the most out of her internship experience and has been a true asset to the office.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Anneliese for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to

the Senate by Ms. Roberts, one of his secretaries.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE

REPORT OF THE VETO OF S.J. RES. 36, A JOINT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED TRANSFER TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, THE KINGDOM OF SPAIN, AND THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC OF CERTAIN DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES—PM 23

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, spread in full upon the Journal, and held at the desk:

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S.J. Res. 36, a joint resolution that would prohibit the issuance of certain licenses with respect to several proposed agreements or transfers to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Kingdom of Spain, and the Italian Republic. This resolution would weaken America's global competitiveness and damage the important relationships we share with our allies and partners.

In particular, S.J. Res. 36 would prohibit licensing for manufacturing in Saudi Arabia of Guidance Electronics Detector Assemblies, Computer Control Groups, Airfoil Groups, Aircraft Umbilical Interconnect Systems, Fuses, and other components to support the production of Paveway II, Enhanced Paveway II, and Paveway IV munitions. The misguided licensing prohibitions in the joint resolution directly conflict with the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States, which include strengthening defense alliances with friendly countries throughout the world, deepening partnerships that preserve and extend our global influence, and enhancing our competitiveness in key markets. Apart from negatively affecting our bilateral relationships with Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, Spain, and Italy, the joint resolution would hamper the ability of the United States to sustain and shape critical security cooperation activities. S.J. Res. 36 would also damage the credibility of the United States as a reliable partner by signaling that we are willing to abandon our partners and allies at the very moment when threats to them are increasing.

The United States is providing the licenses that the joint resolution seeks to prohibit for many reasons. First and foremost, it is our solemn duty to protect the safety of the more than 80,000

United States citizens who reside in Saudi Arabia and who are imperiled by Houthi attacks from Yemen. The Houthis, supported by Iran, have attacked civilian and military facilities using missiles, armed drones, and explosive boats, including in areas frequented by United States citizens, such as the airport in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Second, the joint resolution would degrade Saudi Arabia's military preparedness and ability to protect its sovereignty, directly affecting its ability to defend United States military personnel hosted there. Third, Saudi Arabia is a bulwark against the malign activities of Iran and its proxies in the region, and the licenses the joint resolution would prohibit enhance Saudi Arabia's ability to deter and defend against these threats.

In addition, S.J. Res. 36 would negatively affect our NATO Allies and the transatlantic defense industry. It could, for example, produce unintended consequences for defense procurement and interoperability with and between our partners. It could also create diplomatic and security opportunities for our adversaries to exploit.

Finally, by restricting the ability of our partners to produce and purchase precision-guided munitions, S.J. Res. 36 would likely prolong the conflict in Yemen and deepen the suffering it causes. By undermining bilateral relationships of the United States and impeding our ability to support key partners at a critical time, the joint resolution would harm—not help—efforts to end the conflict in Yemen. And without precision-guided munitions, more—not fewer—civilians are likely to become casualties of the conflict. While I share concerns that certain Members of Congress have expressed about civilian casualties of this conflict, the United States has taken and will continue to take action to minimize such casualties, including training and advising Saudi-led Coalition forces to improve their targeting processes.

The United States is very concerned about the conflict's toll on innocent civilians and is working to bring the conflict in Yemen to an end. But we cannot end it through ill-conceived and time-consuming resolutions that fail to address its root causes. Rather than expend time and resources on such resolutions, I encourage the Congress to direct its efforts toward supporting our work to achieve peace through a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Yemen.

For these reasons, it is my duty to return S.J. Res. 36 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.
THE WHITE HOUSE, July 24, 2019.

REPORT OF THE VETO OF S.J. RES. 37, A JOINT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED EXPORT TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, AND THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE OF CERTAIN DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES—PM 24

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, spread in full upon the Journal, and held at the desk:

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S.J. Res. 37, a joint resolution that would prohibit the issuance of export licenses for certain defense articles, defense services, and technical data to support the transfer of Paveway II kits to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Republic of France. This resolution would weaken America's global competitiveness and damage the important relationships we share with our allies and partners.

In particular, S.J. Res. 37 would prohibit the issuance of export licenses for Paveway II kits to the UAE, the United Kingdom, and France. The misguided licensing prohibitions in the joint resolution directly conflict with the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States, which include strengthening defense alliances with friendly countries throughout the world, deepening partnerships that preserve and extend our global influence, and enhancing our competitiveness in key markets. Apart from negatively affecting our bilateral relationships with the UAE, the United Kingdom, and France, the joint resolution would hamper the ability of the United States to sustain and shape critical security cooperation activities with those partners. S.J. Res. 37 would also damage the credibility of the United States as a reliable partner by signaling that we are willing to abandon our partners and allies at the very moment when threats to them are increasing.

The United States is providing the licenses that the joint resolution seeks to prohibit for many reasons. First and foremost, it is our solemn duty to protect the safety of the more than 80,000 United States citizens who reside in Saudi Arabia and are imperiled by Houthis attacking from Yemen using missiles, armed drones, and explosive boats. The UAE is an important part of the Saudi-led Coalition that helps protect Americans from these Iranian-supported Houthi attacks on civilian and military facilities, including those located in areas frequented by United States citizens like the airport in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Second, the joint resolution would degrade the UAE's

military preparedness and ability to protect its sovereignty, directly affecting its ability to defend the thousands of United States military personnel hosted there. Third, the UAE is a bulwark against the malign activities of Iran and its proxies in the region. It is also an active partner with the United States in combatting terrorism in Yemen and elsewhere. The licenses the joint resolution would prohibit enhance our partner's ability to deter and defend against these threats.

In addition, S.J. Res. 37 would negatively affect our NATO Allies and the transatlantic defense industry. It could, for example, produce unintended consequences for defense procurement and interoperability with and between our partners. It could also create diplomatic and security opportunities for our adversaries to exploit.

Finally, by restricting the ability of our partners to produce and purchase precision-guided munitions, S.J. Res. 37 would likely prolong the conflict in Yemen and deepen the suffering it causes. By undermining bilateral relationships of the United States and impeding our ability to support key partners at a critical time, the joint resolution would harm—not help—efforts to end the conflict in Yemen. And without precision-guided munitions, more—not fewer—civilians are likely to become casualties of the conflict. While I share concerns that certain Members of Congress have expressed about civilian casualties of this conflict, the United States has taken and will continue to take action to minimize such casualties, including training and advising the Saudi-led Coalition forces to improve their targeting processes.

The United States is very concerned about the conflict's toll on innocent civilians and is working to bring the conflict in Yemen to an end. But we cannot end it through ill-conceived and time-consuming resolutions that fail to address its root causes. Rather than expend time and resources on such resolutions, I encourage the Congress to direct its efforts toward supporting our work to achieve peace through a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Yemen.

For these reasons, it is my duty to return S.J. Res. 37 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.
THE WHITE HOUSE, July 24, 2019.

REPORT OF THE VETO OF S.J. RES. 38, A JOINT RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED EXPORT TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND OF CERTAIN DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES—PM 25

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying

report, which was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, spread in full upon the Journal, and held at the desk:

To the Senate of the United States:

I am returning herewith without my approval S.J. Res. 38, a joint resolution that would prohibit the issuance of export licenses for the proposed transfer of defense articles, defense services, and technical data to support the manufacture of the Aurora Fuzing System for the Paveway IV Precision Guided Bomb Program in regard to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This resolution would weaken America's global competitiveness and damage the important relationships we share with our allies and partners.

In particular, S.J. Res. 38 would prohibit the issuance of export licenses for the proposed transfer of defense articles, defense services, and technical data for the manufacturing of the Aurora Fuzing System for the Paveway IV Precision Guided Bomb Program. The misguided licensing prohibition in the joint resolution directly conflicts with the foreign policy and national security objectives of the United States, which include strengthening defense alliances with friendly countries throughout the world, deepening partnerships that preserve and extend our global influence, and enhancing our competitiveness in key markets. Apart from negatively affecting our bilateral relationships with Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom, the joint resolution would hamper the ability of the United States to sustain and shape critical security cooperation activities. S.J. Res. 38 would also damage the credibility of the United States as a reliable partner by signaling that we are willing to abandon our partners and allies at the very moment when threats to them are increasing.

The United States is providing the licenses that the joint resolution seeks to prohibit for many reasons. First and foremost, it is our solemn duty to protect the safety of the more than 80,000 United States citizens who reside in Saudi Arabia and who are imperiled by Houthi attacks from Yemen. The Houthis, supported by Iran, have attacked civilian and military facilities using missiles, armed drones, and explosive boats, including in areas frequented by United States citizens, such as the airport in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Second, the joint resolution would degrade Saudi Arabia's military preparedness and ability to protect its sovereignty, directly affecting its ability to defend United States military personnel hosted there. Third, Saudi Arabia is a bulwark against the malign activities of Iran and its proxies in the region, and the licenses the joint resolution would prohibit enhance Saudi Arabia's ability to deter and defend against these threats.

In addition, S.J. Res. 38 would negatively affect our NATO Allies and the transatlantic defense industry. It

could, for example, produce unintended consequences for defense procurement and interoperability with and between our partners. It could also create diplomatic and security opportunities for our adversaries to exploit.

Finally, by restricting the ability of our partners to produce and purchase precision-guided munitions, S.J. Res. 38 would likely prolong the conflict in Yemen and deepen the suffering it causes. By undermining bilateral relationships of the United States and impeding our ability to support key partners at a critical time, the joint resolution would harm—not help—efforts to end the conflict in Yemen. And without precision-guided munitions, more—not fewer—civilians are likely to become casualties of the conflict. While I share concerns that certain Members of Congress have expressed about civilian casualties of this conflict, the United States has taken and will continue to take action to minimize such casualties, including training and advising the Saudi-led Coalition forces to improve their targeting processes.

The United States is very concerned about the conflict's toll on innocent civilians and is working to bring the conflict in Yemen to an end. But we cannot end it through ill-conceived and time-consuming resolutions that fail to address its root causes. Rather than expend time and resources on such resolutions, I encourage the Congress to direct its efforts toward supporting our work to achieve peace through a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Yemen.

For these reasons, it is my duty to return S.J. Res. 38 to the Senate without my approval.

DONALD J. TRUMP.
THE WHITE HOUSE, July 24, 2019.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTIONS SIGNED

At 9:32 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled joint resolutions:

S.J. Res. 36. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed transfer to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Kingdom of Spain, and the Italian Republic of certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 37. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed export to the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Republic of France of certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 38. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed export to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland of certain defense articles and services.

The enrolled joint resolutions were subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

At 11:49 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 504. An act to amend title 36, United States Code, to authorize The American Legion to determine the requirements for membership in The American Legion, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 34. An act to ensure consideration of water intensity in the Department of Energy's energy research, development, and demonstration programs to help guarantee efficient, reliable, and sustainable delivery of energy and clean water resources.

H.R. 36. An act to provide for research to better understand the causes and consequences of sexual harassment affecting individuals in the scientific, technical, engineering, and mathematics workforce and to examine policies to reduce the prevalence and negative impact of such harassment, and for other purposes.

H.R. 617. An act to authorize the Department of Energy to conduct collaborative research with the Department of Veterans Affairs in order to improve healthcare services for veterans in the United States, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1665. An act to direct the National Science Foundation to support STEM education research focused on early childhood.

H.R. 1837. An act to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize assistance for Israel, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1850. An act to impose sanctions with respect to foreign support for Palestinian terrorism, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2397. An act to amend the National Institute of Standards and Technology Act to make changes to the implementation of the Manufacturing USA Network, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2938. An act to exempt from the calculation of monthly income certain benefits paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.

H.R. 2942. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out the Women's Health Transition Training pilot program through at least fiscal year 2020, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2943. An act to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make all fact sheets of the Department of Veterans Affairs in English, Spanish, and Tagalog.

H.R. 3153. An act to direct the Director of the National Science Foundation to support research on opioid addiction, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3196. An act to designate the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope as the "Vera C. Rubin Observatory".

H.R. 3304. An act to exempt for an additional 4-year period, from the application of the means-test presumption of abuse under chapter 7, qualifying members of the reserve components of the Armed Forces and members of the National Guard who, after September 11, 2001, are called to active duty or to perform a homeland defense activity for not less than 90 days.

H.R. 3311. An act to amend chapter 11 of title 11, United States Code, to address reorganization of small businesses, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3504. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for improvements to the specially adapted housing program and educational assistance programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 12:26 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 1327. An act to extend authorization for the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund of 2001 through fiscal year 2092, and for other purposes.

The enrolled bill was subsequently signed by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 34. An act to ensure consideration of water intensity in the Department of Energy's energy research, development, and demonstration programs to help guarantee efficient, reliable, and sustainable delivery of energy and clean water resources; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 36. An act to provide for research to better understand the causes and consequences of sexual harassment affecting individuals in the scientific, technical, engineering, and mathematics workforce and to examine policies to reduce the prevalence and negative impact of such harassment, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

H.R. 617. An act to authorize the Department of Energy to conduct collaborative research with the Department of Veterans Affairs in order to improve healthcare services for veterans in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1665. An act to direct the National Science Foundation to support STEM education research focused on early childhood; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 1837. An act to make improvements to certain defense and security assistance provisions and to authorize assistance for Israel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 1850. An act to impose sanctions with respect to foreign support for Palestinian terrorism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

H.R. 2397. An act to amend the National Institute of Standards and Technology Act to make changes to the implementation of the Manufacturing USA Network, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

H.R. 3153. An act to direct the Director of the National Science Foundation to support research on opioid addiction, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 2258. A bill to provide anti-retaliation protections for antitrust whistleblowers.

ENROLLED JOINT RESOLUTIONS
PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on today, July 24, 2019, she had presented to the President of the United States the following enrolled joint resolutions:

S.J. Res. 36. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed transfer to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Kingdom of Spain, and the Italian Republic of certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 37. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed export to the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Republic of France of certain defense articles and services.

S.J. Res. 38. Joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval of the proposed export to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland of certain defense articles and services.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER
COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2088. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Lactic Acid; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9994-63-OCSP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 19, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2089. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Sulfoxafloz; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9995-63-OCSP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 19, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2090. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Review Group, Farm Service Agency, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Emergency Conservation Program" (RIN0560-AI46) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 22, 2019; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-2091. A communication from the Acting Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of General Robert B. Brown, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2092. A communication from the Acting Secretary of Defense, transmitting a report on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General Steven L. Kwast, United States Air Force, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2093. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the continuation of the national emergency with respect to significant transnational criminal organizations that was established in Executive Order 13581 on July 24, 2011; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2094. A communication from the Program Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Liquidity Coverage Ratio: Treatment of Certain Municipal Obligations as High-Quality Liquid Assets" (RIN1557-

AE36) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 19, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2095. A communication from the Program Specialist, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Reduced Reporting for Covered Depository Institutions" (RIN1557-AE39) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 19, 2019; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2096. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget, Executive Office of the President, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on appropriations legislation within seven days of enactment; to the Committee on the Budget.

EC-2097. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Kentucky: Jefferson County Definitions and Federally Enforceable District Origin Operating Permits" (FRL No. 9996-92-Region 4) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 19, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2098. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Maryland; Update to Materials Incorporated by Reference" (FRL No. 9992-15-Region 3) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 19, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2099. A communication from the Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Protection of Human Research Subjects" (FRL No. 9996-48-ORD) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 19, 2019; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2100. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-78, "Fiscal Year 2020 Local Budget Act of 2019"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2101. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-79, "Adelaide Alley Designation Act of 2019"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2102. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 23-86, "Legitimate Theater Sidewalk Cafe Authorization Temporary Amendment Act of 2019"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2103. A communication from the Director, White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Chief Financial Officer of the Department of Education, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 22, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2104. A communication from the Director, White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position

of Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 22, 2019; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2105. A communication from the Chief Financial Officer of the National Tropical Botanical Garden, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to an audit of the Garden for the period from January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2018; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-2106. A communication from the Deputy Chief, Auctions Division, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Auction of Construction Permits for Low Power Television and TV Translator Stations Scheduled for September 10, 2019; Notice and Filing Requirements, Minimum Opening Bids, Upfront Payments, and Other Procedures for Auction 104" (DA 19-477) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 22, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2107. A communication from the Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary Designation" (RIN0648-BG02) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 22, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2108. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Allow the Use of Longline Pot Gear in the Gulf of Alaska Sablefish Individual Fishing Quota Fishery; Amendment 101" (RIN0648-BF42) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 22, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2109. A communication from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Gulf of Alaska; Final 2018 and 2019 Harvest Specification for Groundfish" (RIN0648-XF633) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 22, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2110. A communication from the Director, Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Vessel and Aircraft Discharges from United States Coast Guard in Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries" (RIN0648-BG73) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 22, 2019; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. WICKER for the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

*Coast Guard nomination of Rear Adm. Todd C. Wiemers, to be Rear Admiral (Lower Half).

By Mr. JOHNSON for the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

*William Bryan, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Science and Technology, Department of Homeland Security.

*Robert M. Duncan, of Kentucky, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service for a term expiring December 8, 2025.

*Chad F. Wolf, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Strategy, Policy, and Plans, Department of Homeland Security.

*Rainey R. Brandt, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

*Shana Frost Matini, of the District of Columbia, to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia for the term of fifteen years.

*Catherine Bird, of Texas, to be General Counsel of the Federal Labor Relations Authority for a term of five years.

*Ann C. Fisher, of the District of Columbia, to be a Commissioner of the Postal Regulatory Commission for a term expiring October 14, 2024.

*Ashley Jay Elizabeth Poling, of North Carolina, to be a Commissioner of the Postal Regulatory Commission for a term expiring November 22, 2024.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2243. A bill to amend the Expedited Funds Availability Act to require that funds deposited be available for withdrawal in real-time, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. ROBERTS:

S. 2244. A bill to amend the Controlled Substances Act to allow community addiction treatment facilities and community mental health facilities to register to dispense controlled substances through the practice of telemedicine, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BRAUN (for himself and Mr. YOUNG):

S. 2245. A bill to cap noninterest Federal Spending as a percentage of potential GDP to right-size the government, grow the economy, and balance the budget; to the Committee on the Budget.

By Mr. MORAN:

S. 2246. A bill to amend titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act to provide equal coverage of in vitro specific IgE tests and percutaneous tests for allergies under the Medicare and Medicaid programs, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. KENNEDY (for himself, Mr. TESTER, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. DAINES, Mr. CRAMER, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 2247. A bill to amend titles XI and XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide greater transparency of discounts provided by drug manufacturers, to establish requirements relating to pharmacy-negotiated price concessions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina:

S. 2248. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to redesignate and expand the

Troops-to-Teachers Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. WICKER:

S. 2249. A bill to allow the Deputy Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration on the date of enactment of this Act to continue to serve as such Deputy Administrator; considered and passed.

By Ms. BALDWIN (for herself, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 2250. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish State and Indian tribe grants for community colleges and grants for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Minority-Serving Institutions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself and Mr. PAUL):

S. 2251. A bill to permanently extend the exemption for the aging process of distilled spirits from the production period for purposes of capitalization of interest costs; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Mr. CARDIN):

S. 2252. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to expand the permitted uses of drug price information disclosed to States under the Medicaid drug rebate program; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2253. A bill to amend chapter 2205 of title 36, United States Code, to provide pay equity for amateur athletes and other personnel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. BROWN (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CASEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. JONES, Mr. KAINE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PETERS, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. WARREN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE):

S. 2254. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to create a Pension Rehabilitation Trust Fund, to establish a Pension Rehabilitation Administration within the Department of the Treasury to make loans to multiemployer defined benefit plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. BROWN):

S. 2255. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to expand the requirement for States to suspend, rather than terminate, an individual's eligibility for medical assistance under the State Medicaid plan while the individual is an inmate of a public institution, to apply to inmates of any age; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. SMITH (for herself, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. KAINE, Mr. CASEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. REED, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. UDALL, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, and Mr. BOOKER):

S. 2256. A bill to protect children affected by immigration enforcement actions; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COONS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms.

HIRONO, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. SMITH, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2257. A bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. COONS, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2258. A bill to provide anti-retaliation protections for antitrust whistleblowers; read the first time.

By Mr. CASEY (for himself and Ms. MURKOWSKI):

S. 2259. A bill to amend the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act to make improvements; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and Mr. MENENDEZ):

S. 2260. A bill to provide for the improvement of domestic infrastructure in order to prevent marine debris, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. COONS (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. DAINES):

S. Res. 283. A resolution expressing support for the designation of 2019 as the "International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements"; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 153

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 153, a bill to promote veteran involvement in STEM education, computer science, and scientific research, and for other purposes.

S. 178

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 178, a bill to condemn gross human rights violations of ethnic Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang, and calling for an end to arbitrary detention, torture, and harassment of these communities inside and outside China.

S. 206

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 206, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the female telephone operators of the Army Signal Corps, known as the "Hello Girls".

S. 327

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 327, a bill to amend the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act to provide for a lifetime National Recreational Pass for any veteran with a service-connected disability.

S. 551

At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the names of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) and the Senator from Indiana (Mr. BRAUN) were added as cosponsors of S. 551, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to require manufacturers of certain single-dose vial drugs payable under part B of the Medicare program to provide rebates with respect to amounts of such drugs discarded, and for other purposes.

S. 569

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. HOEVEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 569, a bill to direct the Secretary of Transportation to issue regulations relating to commercial motor vehicle drivers under the age of 21, and for other purposes.

S. 638

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 638, a bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to designate per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances as hazardous substances under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, Liability Act of 1980, and for other purposes.

S. 684

At the request of Mr. HEINRICH, the name of the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 684, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the excise tax on high-cost employer-sponsored health coverage.

S. 931

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 931, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to enhance the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit and make the credit fully refundable.

S. 1088

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1088, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to require the President to set a minimum annual goal for the number of refugees to be admitted, and for other purposes.

S. 1116

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Ms. MCSALLY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1116, a bill to require providers of broadband internet access service and edge services to clearly and conspicuously notify users of the privacy policies of those providers, to give users opt-in or opt-out approval rights with respect to the use of, disclosure of, and access to user information collected by those providers based on the level of sensitivity of the information, and for other purposes.

S. 1247

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Nevada

(Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1247, a bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to require reporting to the Federal Election Commission and the Federal Bureau of Investigation of offers by foreign nationals to make prohibited contributions, donations, expenditures, or disbursements, and for other purposes.

S. 1267

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1267, a bill to establish within the Smithsonian Institution the National Museum of the American Latino, and for other purposes.

S. 1416

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1416, a bill to amend the Federal Trade Commission Act to prohibit anticompetitive behaviors by drug product manufacturers, and for other purposes.

S. 1602

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1602, a bill to amend the United States Energy Storage Competitiveness Act of 2007 to establish a research, development, and demonstration program for grid-scale energy storage systems, and for other purposes.

S. 1608

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Ms. WARREN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1608, a bill to provide for the publication by the Secretary of Health and Human Services of physical activity recommendations for Americans.

S. 1685

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1685, a bill to require the Secretary of Energy to establish a program for the research, development, and demonstration of commercially viable technologies for the capture of carbon dioxide produced during the generation of natural gas-generated power.

S. 1728

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1728, a bill to require the United States Postal Service to sell the Alzheimer's semipostal stamp for 6 additional years.

S. 1769

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1769, a bill to require the Secretary of Energy to establish an offshore wind career training grant program, and for other purposes.

S. 1822

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the names of the Senator from Connecticut

(Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH), the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN), the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING), the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARASSO), and the Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CRAMER) were added as cosponsors of S. 1822, a bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to issue rules relating to the collection of data with respect to the availability of broadband services, and for other purposes.

S. 1840

At the request of Mrs. FISCHER, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1840, a bill to establish certain requirements for the small refineries exemption of the renewable fuels provisions under the Clean Air Act, and for other purposes.

S. 1907

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1907, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to prohibit the stigmatization of children who are unable to pay for school meals, and for other purposes.

S. 1918

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1918, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require alternative options for summer food service program delivery.

S. 1936

At the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1936, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to protect coverage for screening mammography, and for other purposes.

S. 1949

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1949, a bill to amend the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to require the Secretary of Agriculture to make loan guarantees and grants to finance certain improvements to school lunch facilities, to train school food service personnel, and for other purposes.

S. 2001

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2001, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Willie O'Ree, in recognition of his extraordinary contributions and commitment to hockey, inclusion, and recreational opportunity.

S. 2048

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. GARDNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2048, a bill to require the Secretary of Energy to establish a demonstration

initiative focused on the development of long-duration energy storage technologies, including a joint program to be established in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, and for other purposes.

S. 2065

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2065, a bill to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to publish an annual report on the use of deepfake technology, and for other purposes.

S. 2085

At the request of Ms. ROSEN, the names of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) were added as cosponsors of S. 2085, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to eligible entities to carry out educational programs about the Holocaust, and for other purposes.

S. 2166

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2166, a bill to designate Regional Ocean Partnerships of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 142

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 142, a resolution condemning the Government of the Philippines for its continued detention of Senator Leila De Lima, calling for her immediate release, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 252

At the request of Mrs. FEINSTEIN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 252, a resolution designating September 2019 as National Democracy Month as a time to reflect on the contributions of the system of government of the United States to a more free and stable world.

S. RES. 260

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. ROSEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 260, a resolution recognizing the importance of sustained United States leadership to accelerating global progress against maternal and child malnutrition and supporting the commitment of the United States Agency for International Development to global nutrition through the Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Strategy.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. WICKER:

S. 2249. A bill to allow the Deputy Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration on the date of enactment of this Act to continue to serve as such Deputy Administrator; considered and passed.

S. 2249

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AUTHORITY FOR CONTINUATION OF SERVICE OF THE DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR OF THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—An individual serving as Deputy Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration on the date of enactment of this Act may continue to serve as such Deputy Administrator, without regard to the restrictions specified in the 5th sentence of section 106(d)(1) of title 49, United States Code.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act shall be construed as approval by Congress of any future appointments of military persons to the Offices of Administrator and Deputy Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration.

By Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself and Mr. PAUL):

S. 2251. A bill to permanently extend the exemption for the aging process of distilled spirits from the production period for purposes of capitalization of interest costs; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2251

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Advancing Growth in the Economy through Distilled Spirits Act” or the “AGED Spirits Act”.

SEC. 2. PRODUCTION PERIOD OF DISTILLED SPIRITS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subparagraph (B) of section 263A(f)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended to read as follows:

“(B) TERMINATION.—Clauses (i) and (ii) of subparagraph (A) shall not apply to interest costs paid or accrued after December 31, 2019.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by this section shall apply to interest costs paid or accrued after December 31, 2019.

By Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 2253. A bill to amend chapter 2205 of title 36, United States Code, to provide pay equity for amateur athletes and other personnel, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce the Even Playing Field Act of 2019. This legislation is an important step forward in ensuring that women in sports are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

Female athletes, coaches, and trainers are consistently paid less than their male counterparts, subjected to subpar working conditions, and receive substantially less investment in their athletic programs. Simply put, the same opportunities and resources provided to men's teams are not provided

to women's teams. The inequities in women's sports recently came to light in a gender discrimination lawsuit filed by the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team against the U.S. Soccer Federation.

Although the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team consistently outperforms the Men's Team—having won four FIFA Women's World Cup titles and four Olympic gold medals—the lawsuit alleges that the Women's Team is paid an average of 38 cents on the dollar compared to the men.

The gender pay gap isn't limited to players, either. Jill Ellis, the coach of the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team, is paid less than half of what the Men's Team coaches are paid. This is despite the fact that the Men's Team failed to even qualify for the last World Cup.

Unfortunately, the disparate treatment of women in sports is not limited to pay. Megan Rapinoe, a captain of the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team, said in a recent interview with CNN: "It's really more about the investment in the game. Is the investment equal? We're talking marketing dollars and branding, investment in the youth, investment in the players, investment in the coaching staff. I don't think that that's there. I don't think that that's ever been there."

It is clear that we must do more to promote and protect women in sports. This legislation is a step towards that goal by making critical updates to the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act.

First, the bill would require the U.S. Olympic Committee to provide female athletes with wages, investment and working conditions equal to their male counterparts.

Second, the bill would clarify that national governing bodies for amateur sports must provide investment, working conditions, wages and other compensation for amateur athletes, coaches, trainers, managers, administrators and officials that is free from discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age or national origin.

Third, the bill would further clarify that national governing bodies for amateur sports must provide equitable support and encouragement for participation by women in sports, including investment, working conditions, wages, and other compensation.

Finally, the bill would mandate that national governing bodies submit regular reports to Congress on their compensation practices by race and gender. I hope my colleagues will consider and support this legislation.

I thank the chair, and I yield the floor.

By Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COONS, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. HARRIS, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. KING, Ms. KLO-

BUCHAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SCHATZ, Ms. SMITH, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, and Ms. WARREN):

S. 2257. A bill to reform the financing of Senate elections, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2257

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Fair Elections Now Act of 2019".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents of this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

TITLE I—SMALL DOLLAR FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Sec. 101. Eligibility requirements and benefits of Fair Elections financing of Senate election campaigns.

Sec. 102. Prohibition on joint fundraising committees.

Sec. 103. Exception to limitation on coordinated expenditures by political party committees with participating candidates.

TITLE II—IMPROVING VOTER INFORMATION

Sec. 201. Broadcasts relating to all Senate candidates.

Sec. 202. Broadcast rates for participating candidates.

Sec. 203. FCC to prescribe standardized form for reporting candidate campaign ads.

TITLE III—RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

Sec. 301. Petition for certiorari.

Sec. 302. Electronic filing of FEC reports.

TITLE IV—REVENUE PROVISIONS

Sec. 401. Fair Elections Fund revenue.

TITLE V—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Sec. 501. Severability.

Sec. 502. Effective date.

TITLE I—SMALL DOLLAR FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

SEC. 101. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND BENEFITS OF FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS.

The Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (52 U.S.C. 30101 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"TITLE V—FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING OF SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

"Subtitle A—General Provisions

"SEC. 501. DEFINITIONS.

"In this title:

"(1) ALLOCATION FROM THE FUND.—The term 'allocation from the Fund' means an allocation of money from the Fair Elections Fund to a participating candidate pursuant to section 522.

"(2) COMMISSION.—The term 'Commission' means the Federal Election Commission.

"(3) ENHANCED MATCHING CONTRIBUTION.—The term 'enhanced matching contribution' means an enhanced matching payment provided to a participating candidate for qualified small dollar contributions, as provided under section 524.

"(4) ENHANCED SUPPORT QUALIFYING PERIOD.—The term 'enhanced support qualifying period' means, with respect to a general election, the period which begins 60 days before the date of the election and ends 14 days before the date of the election.

"(5) FAIR ELECTIONS QUALIFYING PERIOD.—The term 'Fair Elections qualifying period' means, with respect to any candidate for Senator, the period—

"(A) beginning on the date on which the candidate files a statement of intent under section 511(a)(1); and

"(B) ending on the date that is 30 days before—

"(i) the date of the primary election; or

"(ii) in the case of a State that does not hold a primary election, the date prescribed by State law as the last day to qualify for a position on the general election ballot.

"(6) FAIR ELECTIONS START DATE.—The term 'Fair Elections start date' means, with respect to any candidate, the date that is 180 days before—

"(A) the date of the primary election; or

"(B) in the case of a State that does not hold a primary election, the date prescribed by State law as the last day to qualify for a position on the general election ballot.

"(7) FUND.—The term 'Fund' means the Fair Elections Fund established by section 502.

"(8) IMMEDIATE FAMILY.—The term 'immediate family' means, with respect to any candidate—

"(A) the candidate's spouse;

"(B) a child, stepchild, parent, grandparent, brother, half-brother, sister, or half-sister of the candidate or the candidate's spouse; and

"(C) the spouse of any person described in subparagraph (B).

"(9) MATCHING CONTRIBUTION.—The term 'matching contribution' means a matching payment provided to a participating candidate for qualified small dollar contributions, as provided under section 523.

"(10) NONPARTICIPATING CANDIDATE.—The term 'nonparticipating candidate' means a candidate for Senator who is not a participating candidate.

"(11) PARTICIPATING CANDIDATE.—The term 'participating candidate' means a candidate for Senator who is certified under section 514 as being eligible to receive an allocation from the Fund.

"(12) QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION.—The term 'qualifying contribution' means, with respect to a candidate, a contribution that—

"(A) is in an amount that is—

"(i) not less than the greater of \$5 or the amount determined by the Commission under section 531; and

"(ii) not more than the greater of \$200 or the amount determined by the Commission under section 531;

"(B) is made by an individual—

"(i) who is a resident of the State in which such candidate is seeking election; and

"(ii) who is not otherwise prohibited from making a contribution under this Act;

"(C) is made during the Fair Elections qualifying period; and

"(D) meets the requirements of section 512(b).

"(13) QUALIFIED SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTION.—The term 'qualified small dollar contribution' means, with respect to a candidate, any contribution (or series of contributions)—

"(A) which is not a qualifying contribution (or does not include a qualifying contribution);

"(B) which is made by an individual who is not prohibited from making a contribution under this Act; and

"(C) the aggregate amount of which does not exceed the greater of—

“(i) \$200 per election; or
 “(ii) the amount per election determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(14) QUALIFYING MULTICANDIDATE POLITICAL COMMITTEE CONTRIBUTION.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘qualifying multicandidate political committee contribution’ means any contribution to a candidate that is made from a qualified account of a multicandidate political committee (within the meaning of section 315(a)(2)).

“(B) QUALIFIED ACCOUNT.—For purposes of subparagraph (A), the term ‘qualified account’ means, with respect to a multicandidate political committee, a separate, segregated account of the committee that consists solely of contributions which meet the following requirements:

“(i) All contributions to such account are made by individuals who are not prohibited from making contributions under this Act.

“(ii) The aggregate amount of contributions from each individual to such account and all other accounts of the political committee do not exceed the amount described in paragraph (13)(C).

“SEC. 502. FAIR ELECTIONS FUND.

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the Treasury a fund to be known as the ‘Fair Elections Fund’.

“(b) AMOUNTS HELD BY FUND.—The Fund shall consist of the following amounts:

“(1) APPROPRIATED AMOUNTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Amounts appropriated to the Fund.

“(B) SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING APPROPRIATIONS.—It is the sense of the Senate that—

“(i) there should be imposed on any payment made to any person (other than a State or local government or a foreign nation) who has a contract with the Government of the United States in excess of \$10,000,000 a tax equal to 0.50 percent of amount paid pursuant to each contract, except that the aggregate tax on each contract for any taxable year shall not exceed \$500,000; and

“(ii) the revenue from such tax should be appropriated to the Fund.

“(2) VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS.—Voluntary contributions to the Fund.

“(3) OTHER DEPOSITS.—Amounts deposited into the Fund under—

“(A) section 513(c) (relating to exceptions to contribution requirements);

“(B) section 521(c) (relating to remittance of allocations from the Fund);

“(C) section 532 (relating to violations); and

“(D) any other section of this Act.

“(4) INVESTMENT RETURNS.—Interest on, and the proceeds from, the sale or redemption of, any obligations held by the Fund under subsection (c).

“(c) INVESTMENT.—The Commission shall invest portions of the Fund in obligations of the United States in the same manner as provided under section 9602(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

“(d) USE OF FUND.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The sums in the Fund shall be used to provide benefits to participating candidates as provided in subtitle C.

“(2) INSUFFICIENT AMOUNTS.—Under regulations established by the Commission, rules similar to the rules of section 9006(c) of the Internal Revenue Code shall apply.

“Subtitle B—Eligibility and Certification

“SEC. 511. ELIGIBILITY.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—A candidate for Senator is eligible to receive an allocation from the Fund for any election if the candidate meets the following requirements:

“(1) The candidate files with the Commission a statement of intent to seek certification as a participating candidate under this title during the period beginning on the

Fair Elections start date and ending on the last day of the Fair Elections qualifying period.

“(2) The candidate meets the qualifying contribution requirements of section 512.

“(3) Not later than the last day of the Fair Elections qualifying period, the candidate files with the Commission an affidavit signed by the candidate and the treasurer of the candidate’s principal campaign committee declaring that the candidate—

“(A) has complied and, if certified, will comply with the contribution and expenditure requirements of section 513;

“(B) if certified, will not run as a non-participating candidate during such year in any election for the office that such candidate is seeking; and

“(C) has either qualified or will take steps to qualify under State law to be on the ballot.

“(b) GENERAL ELECTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), a candidate shall not be eligible to receive an allocation from the Fund for a general election or a general runoff election unless the candidate’s party nominated the candidate to be placed on the ballot for the general election or the candidate otherwise qualified to be on the ballot under State law.

“SEC. 512. QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION REQUIREMENT.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—A candidate for Senator meets the requirement of this section if, during the Fair Elections qualifying period, the candidate obtains—

“(1) a number of qualifying contributions equal to the greater of—

“(A) the sum of—

“(i) 2,000; plus

“(ii) 500 for each congressional district in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election; or

“(B) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531; and

“(2) a total dollar amount of qualifying contributions equal to the greater of—

“(A) 10 percent of the amount of the allocation such candidate would be entitled to receive for the primary election under section 522(c)(1) (determined without regard to paragraph (5) thereof) if such candidate were a participating candidate; or

“(B) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(b) REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO RECEIPT OF QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTION.—Each qualifying contribution—

“(1) may be made by means of a personal check, money order, debit card, credit card, or electronic payment account;

“(2) shall be accompanied by a signed statement containing—

“(A) the contributor’s name and the contributor’s address in the State in which the contributor is registered to vote; and

“(B) an oath declaring that the contributor—

“(i) understands that the purpose of the qualifying contribution is to show support for the candidate so that the candidate may qualify for Fair Elections financing;

“(ii) is making the contribution in his or her own name and from his or her own funds;

“(iii) has made the contribution willingly; and

“(iv) has not received anything of value in return for the contribution; and

“(3) shall be acknowledged by a receipt that is sent to the contributor with a copy kept by the candidate for the Commission and a copy kept by the candidate for the election authorities in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election.

“(c) VERIFICATION OF QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTIONS.—The Commission shall establish procedures for the auditing and verification of

qualifying contributions to ensure that such contributions meet the requirements of this section.

“SEC. 513. CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENTS.

“(a) GENERAL RULE.—A candidate for Senator meets the requirements of this section if, during the election cycle of the candidate, the candidate—

“(1) except as provided in subsection (b), accepts no contributions other than—

“(A) qualifying contributions;

“(B) qualified small dollar contributions;

“(C) qualifying multicandidate political committee contributions;

“(D) allocations from the Fund under section 522;

“(E) matching contributions under section 523;

“(F) enhanced matching contributions under section 524; and

“(G) vouchers provided to the candidate under section 525;

“(2) makes no expenditures from any amounts other than from—

“(A) qualifying contributions;

“(B) qualified small dollar contributions;

“(C) qualifying multicandidate political committee contributions;

“(D) allocations from the Fund under section 522;

“(E) matching contributions under section 523;

“(F) enhanced matching contributions under section 524; and

“(G) vouchers provided to the candidate under section 525; and

“(3) makes no expenditures from personal funds or the funds of any immediate family member (other than funds received through qualified small dollar contributions and qualifying contributions).

For purposes of this subsection, a payment made by a political party in coordination with a participating candidate shall not be treated as a contribution to or as an expenditure made by the participating candidate.

“(b) CONTRIBUTIONS FOR LEADERSHIP PACS, ETC.—A political committee of a participating candidate which is not an authorized committee of such candidate may accept contributions other than contributions described in subsection (a)(1) from any person if—

“(1) the aggregate contributions from such person for any calendar year do not exceed \$200; and

“(2) no portion of such contributions is disbursed in connection with the campaign of the participating candidate.

“(c) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), a candidate shall not be treated as having failed to meet the requirements of this section if any contributions that are not qualified small dollar contributions, qualifying contributions, qualifying multicandidate political committee contributions, or contributions that meet the requirements of subsection (b) and that are accepted before the date the candidate files a statement of intent under section 511(a)(1) are—

“(1) returned to the contributor; or

“(2) submitted to the Commission for deposit in the Fund.

“SEC. 514. CERTIFICATION.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 5 days after a candidate for Senator files an affidavit under section 511(a)(3), the Commission shall—

“(1) certify whether or not the candidate is a participating candidate; and

“(2) notify the candidate of the Commission’s determination.

“(b) REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may revoke a certification under subsection (a) if—

“(A) a candidate fails to qualify to appear on the ballot at any time after the date of certification; or

“(B) a candidate otherwise fails to comply with the requirements of this title, including any regulatory requirements prescribed by the Commission.

“(2) REPAYMENT OF BENEFITS.—If certification is revoked under paragraph (1), the candidate shall repay to the Fund an amount equal to the value of benefits received under this title plus interest (at a rate determined by the Commission) on any such amount received.

“Subtitle C—Benefits

“SEC. 521. BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—For each election with respect to which a candidate is certified as a participating candidate under section 514, such candidate shall be entitled to—

“(1) an allocation from the Fund to make or obligate to make expenditures with respect to such election, as provided in section 522;

“(2) matching contributions, as provided in section 523;

“(3) enhanced matching contributions, as provided in section 524; and

“(4) for the general election, vouchers for broadcasts of political advertisements, as provided in section 525.

“(b) RESTRICTION ON USES OF ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND.—Allocations from the Fund received by a participating candidate under section 522, matching contributions under section 523, and enhanced matching contributions under section 524 may only be used for campaign-related costs.

“(c) REMITTING ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the date that is 45 days after an election in which the participating candidate appeared on the ballot, such participating candidate shall remit to the Commission for deposit in the Fund an amount equal to the lesser of—

“(A) the amount of money in the candidate’s campaign account; or

“(B) the sum of the allocations from the Fund received by the candidate under section 522, the matching contributions received by the candidate under section 523, and the enhanced matching contributions under section 524.

“(2) EXCEPTION.—In the case of a candidate who qualifies to be on the ballot for a primary runoff election, a general election, or a general runoff election, the amounts described in paragraph (1) may be retained by the candidate and used in such subsequent election.

“SEC. 522. ALLOCATIONS FROM THE FUND.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall make allocations from the Fund under section 521(a)(1) to a participating candidate—

“(1) in the case of amounts provided under subsection (c)(1), not later than 48 hours after the date on which such candidate is certified as a participating candidate under section 514;

“(2) in the case of a general election, not later than 48 hours after—

“(A) the date of the certification of the results of the primary election or the primary runoff election; or

“(B) in any case in which there is no primary election, the date the candidate qualifies to be placed on the ballot; and

“(3) in the case of a primary runoff election or a general runoff election, not later than 48 hours after the certification of the results of the primary election or the general election, as the case may be.

“(b) METHOD OF PAYMENT.—The Commission shall distribute funds available to participating candidates under this section through the use of an electronic funds exchange or a debit card.

“(c) AMOUNTS.—

“(1) PRIMARY ELECTION ALLOCATION; INITIAL ALLOCATION.—Except as provided in paragraph (5), the Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a primary election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to 67 percent of the base amount with respect to such participating candidate.

“(2) PRIMARY RUNOFF ELECTION ALLOCATION.—The Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a primary runoff election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to 25 percent of the amount the participating candidate was eligible to receive under this section for the primary election.

“(3) GENERAL ELECTION ALLOCATION.—Except as provided in paragraph (5), the Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a general election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to the base amount with respect to such candidate.

“(4) GENERAL RUNOFF ELECTION ALLOCATION.—The Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund for a general runoff election to a participating candidate in an amount equal to 25 percent of the base amount with respect to such candidate.

“(5) UNCONTESTED ELECTIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In the case of a primary or general election that is an uncontested election, the Commission shall make an allocation from the Fund to a participating candidate for such election in an amount equal to 25 percent of the allocation which such candidate would be entitled to under this section for such election if this paragraph did not apply.

“(B) UNCONTESTED ELECTION DEFINED.—For purposes of this subparagraph, an election is uncontested if not more than 1 candidate has campaign funds (including payments from the Fund) in an amount equal to or greater than 10 percent of the allocation a participating candidate would be entitled to receive under this section for such election if this paragraph did not apply.

“(d) BASE AMOUNT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the base amount for any candidate is an amount equal to the greater of—

“(A) the sum of—

“(i) \$750,000; plus

“(ii) \$150,000 for each congressional district in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election; or

“(B) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(2) INDEXING.—In each even-numbered year after 2025—

“(A) each dollar amount under paragraph (1)(A) shall be increased by the percent difference between the price index (as defined in section 315(c)(2)(A)) for the 12 months preceding the beginning of such calendar year and the price index for calendar year 2022;

“(B) each dollar amount so increased shall remain in effect for the 2-year period beginning on the first day following the date of the last general election in the year preceding the year in which the amount is increased and ending on the date of the next general election; and

“(C) if any amount after adjustment under subparagraph (A) is not a multiple of \$100, such amount shall be rounded to the nearest multiple of \$100.

“SEC. 523. MATCHING PAYMENTS FOR QUALIFIED SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTIONS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall pay to each participating candidate an amount equal to 600 percent of the amount of qualified small dollar contributions received by the candidate from individuals who are residents of the State in which such participating candidate is seeking election after

the date on which such candidate is certified under section 514.

“(b) LIMITATION.—The aggregate payments under subsection (a) with respect to any candidate shall not exceed the greater of—

“(1) 400 percent of the allocation such candidate is entitled to receive for such election under section 522 (determined without regard to subsection (c)(5) thereof); or

“(2) the percentage of such allocation determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(c) TIME OF PAYMENT.—The Commission shall make payments under this section not later than 2 business days after the receipt of a report made under subsection (d).

“(d) REPORTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Each participating candidate shall file reports of receipts of qualified small dollar contributions at such times and in such manner as the Commission may by regulations prescribe.

“(2) CONTENTS OF REPORTS.—Each report under this subsection shall disclose—

“(A) the amount of each qualified small dollar contribution received by the candidate;

“(B) the amount of each qualified small dollar contribution received by the candidate from a resident of the State in which the candidate is seeking election; and

“(C) the name, address, and occupation of each individual who made a qualified small dollar contribution to the candidate.

“(3) FREQUENCY OF REPORTS.—Reports under this subsection shall be made no more frequently than—

“(A) once every month until the date that is 90 days before the date of the election;

“(B) once every week after the period described in subparagraph (A) and until the date that is 21 days before the election; and

“(C) once every day after the period described in subparagraph (B).

“(4) LIMITATION ON REGULATIONS.—The Commission may not prescribe any regulations with respect to reporting under this subsection with respect to any election after the date that is 180 days before the date of such election.

“(e) APPEALS.—The Commission shall provide a written explanation with respect to any denial of any payment under this section and shall provide the opportunity for review and reconsideration within 5 business days of such denial.

“SEC. 524. ENHANCED MATCHING SUPPORT.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—In addition to the payments made under section 523, the Commission shall make an additional payment to an eligible candidate under this section.

“(b) ELIGIBILITY.—A candidate is eligible to receive an additional payment under this section if the candidate meets each of the following requirements:

“(1) The candidate is on the ballot for the general election for the office the candidate seeks.

“(2) The candidate is certified as a participating candidate under this title with respect to the election.

“(3) During the enhanced support qualifying period, the candidate receives qualified small dollar contributions in a total amount of not less than the sum of \$15,000 for each congressional district in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election.

“(4) During the enhanced support qualifying period, the candidate submits to the Commission a request for the payment which includes—

“(A) a statement of the number and amount of qualified small dollar contributions received by the candidate during the enhanced support qualifying period;

“(B) a statement of the amount of the payment the candidate anticipates receiving with respect to the request; and

“(C) such other information and assurances as the Commission may require.

“(5) After submitting a request for the additional payment under paragraph (4), the candidate does not submit any other application for an additional payment under this title.

“(c) AMOUNT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the amount of the additional payment made to an eligible candidate under this subtitle shall be an amount equal to 50 percent of—

“(A) the amount of the payment made to the candidate under section 523 with respect to the qualified small dollar contributions which are received by the candidate during the enhanced support qualifying period (as included in the request submitted by the candidate under (b)(4)(A)); or

“(B) in the case of a candidate who is not eligible to receive a payment under section 523 with respect to such qualified small dollar contributions because the candidate has reached the limit on the aggregate amount of payments under section 523, the amount of the payment which would have been made to the candidate under section 523 with respect to such qualified small dollar contributions if the candidate had not reached such limit.

“(2) LIMIT.—The amount of the additional payment determined under paragraph (1) with respect to a candidate may not exceed the sum of \$150,000 for each congressional district in the State with respect to which the candidate is seeking election.

“(3) NO EFFECT ON AGGREGATE LIMIT.—The amount of the additional payment made to a candidate under this section shall not be included in determining the aggregate amount of payments made to a participating candidate with respect to an election cycle under section 523.

“SEC. 525. POLITICAL ADVERTISING VOUCHERS.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall establish and administer a voucher program for the purchase of airtime on broadcasting stations for political advertisements in accordance with the provisions of this section.

“(b) CANDIDATES.—The Commission shall only disburse vouchers under the program established under subsection (a) to participants certified pursuant to section 514 who have agreed in writing to keep and furnish to the Commission such records, books, and other information as it may require.

“(c) AMOUNTS.—The Commission shall disburse vouchers to each candidate certified under subsection (b) in an aggregate amount equal to the greater of—

“(1) \$100,000 multiplied by the number of congressional districts in the State with respect to which such candidate is running for office; or

“(2) the amount determined by the Commission under section 531.

“(d) USE.—

“(1) EXCLUSIVE USE.—Vouchers disbursed by the Commission under this section may be used only for the purchase of broadcast airtime for political advertisements relating to a general election for the office of Senate by the participating candidate to which the vouchers were disbursed, except that—

“(A) a candidate may exchange vouchers with a political party under paragraph (2); and

“(B) a political party may use vouchers only to purchase broadcast airtime for political advertisements for generic party advertising (as defined by the Commission in regulations), to support candidates for State or local office in a general election, or to support participating candidates of the party in a general election for Federal office, but

only if it discloses the value of the voucher used as an expenditure under section 315(d).

“(2) EXCHANGE WITH POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEE.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—A participating candidate who receives a voucher under this section may transfer the right to use all or a portion of the value of the voucher to a committee of the political party of which the individual is a candidate (or, in the case of a participating candidate who is not a member of any political party, to a committee of the political party of that candidate's choice) in exchange for money in an amount equal to the cash value of the voucher or portion exchanged.

“(B) CONTINUATION OF CANDIDATE OBLIGATIONS.—The transfer of a voucher, in whole or in part, to a political party committee under this paragraph does not release the candidate from any obligation under the agreement made under subsection (b) or otherwise modify that agreement or its application to that candidate.

“(C) PARTY COMMITTEE OBLIGATIONS.—Any political party committee to which a voucher or portion thereof is transferred under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) shall account fully, in accordance with such requirements as the Commission may establish, for the receipt of the voucher; and

“(ii) may not use the transferred voucher or portion thereof for any purpose other than a purpose described in paragraph (1)(B).

“(D) VOUCHER AS A CONTRIBUTION UNDER FECA.—If a candidate transfers a voucher or any portion thereof to a political party committee under subparagraph (A)—

“(i) the value of the voucher or portion thereof transferred shall be treated as a contribution from the candidate to the committee, and from the committee to the candidate, for purposes of sections 302 and 304;

“(ii) the committee may, in exchange, provide to the candidate only funds subject to the prohibitions, limitations, and reporting requirements of title III of this Act; and

“(iii) the amount, if identified as a ‘voucher exchange’, shall not be considered a contribution for the purposes of sections 315 and 513.

“(e) VALUE; ACCEPTANCE; REDEMPTION.—

“(1) VOUCHER.—Each voucher disbursed by the Commission under this section shall have a value in dollars, redeemable upon presentation to the Commission, together with such documentation and other information as the Commission may require, for the purchase of broadcast airtime for political advertisements in accordance with this section.

“(2) ACCEPTANCE.—A broadcasting station shall accept vouchers in payment for the purchase of broadcast airtime for political advertisements in accordance with this section.

“(3) REDEMPTION.—The Commission shall redeem vouchers accepted by broadcasting stations under paragraph (2) upon presentation, subject to such documentation, verification, accounting, and application requirements as the Commission may impose to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the voucher redemption system.

“(4) EXPIRATION.—

“(A) CANDIDATES.—A voucher may only be used to pay for broadcast airtime for political advertisements to be broadcast before midnight on the day before the date of the Federal election in connection with which it was issued and shall be null and void for any other use or purpose.

“(B) EXCEPTION FOR POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEES.—A voucher held by a political party committee may be used to pay for broadcast airtime for political advertisements to be broadcast before midnight on December 31st of the odd-numbered year fol-

lowing the year in which the voucher was issued by the Commission.

“(5) VOUCHER AS EXPENDITURE UNDER FECA.—The use of a voucher to purchase broadcast airtime constitutes an expenditure as defined in section 301(9)(A).

“(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) BROADCASTING STATION.—The term ‘broadcasting station’ has the meaning given that term by section 315(f)(1) of the Communications Act of 1934.

“(2) POLITICAL PARTY.—The term ‘political party’ means a major party or a minor party as defined in section 9002 (3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C. 9002 (3) or (4)).

“Subtitle D—Administrative Provisions

“SEC. 531. DUTIES OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION.

“(a) DUTIES AND POWERS.—

“(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The Commission shall have the power to administer the provisions of this title and shall prescribe regulations to carry out the purposes of this title, including regulations—

“(A) to establish procedures for—

“(i) verifying the amount of valid qualifying contributions with respect to a candidate;

“(ii) effectively and efficiently monitoring and enforcing the limits on the raising of qualified small dollar contributions;

“(iii) monitoring the raising of qualifying multicandidate political committee contributions through effectively and efficiently monitoring and enforcing the limits on individual contributions to qualified accounts of multicandidate political committees;

“(iv) effectively and efficiently monitoring and enforcing the limits on the use of personal funds by participating candidates;

“(v) monitoring the use of allocations from the Fund and matching contributions under this title through audits or other mechanisms; and

“(vi) the administration of the voucher program under section 525; and

“(B) regarding the conduct of debates in a manner consistent with the best practices of States that provide public financing for elections.

“(2) REVIEW OF FAIR ELECTIONS FINANCING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—After each general election for Federal office, the Commission shall conduct a comprehensive review of the Fair Elections financing program under this title, including—

“(i) the maximum dollar amount of qualified small dollar contributions under section 501(13);

“(ii) the maximum and minimum dollar amounts for qualifying contributions under section 501(12);

“(iii) the number and value of qualifying contributions a candidate is required to obtain under section 512 to qualify for allocations from the Fund;

“(iv) the amount of allocations from the Fund that candidates may receive under section 522;

“(v) the maximum amount of matching contributions a candidate may receive under section 523;

“(vi) the maximum amount of enhanced matching contributions a candidate may receive under section 524;

“(vii) the amount and usage of vouchers under section 525;

“(viii) the overall satisfaction of participating candidates and the American public with the program; and

“(ix) such other matters relating to financing of Senate campaigns as the Commission determines are appropriate.

“(B) CRITERIA FOR REVIEW.—In conducting the review under subparagraph (A), the Commission shall consider the following:

“(i) **QUALIFYING CONTRIBUTIONS AND QUALIFIED SMALL DOLLAR CONTRIBUTIONS.**—The Commission shall consider whether the number and dollar amount of qualifying contributions required and maximum dollar amount for such qualifying contributions and qualified small dollar contributions strikes a balance regarding the importance of voter involvement, the need to assure adequate incentives for participating, and fiscal responsibility, taking into consideration the number of primary and general election participating candidates, the electoral performance of those candidates, program cost, and any other information the Commission determines is appropriate.

“(ii) **REVIEW OF PROGRAM BENEFITS.**—The Commission shall consider whether the totality of the amount of funds allowed to be raised by participating candidates (including through qualifying contributions and small dollar contributions), allocations from the Fund under section 522, matching contributions under section 523, enhanced matching contributions under section 524, and vouchers under section 525 are sufficient for voters in each State to learn about the candidates to cast an informed vote, taking into account the historic amount of spending by winning candidates, media costs, primary election dates, and any other information the Commission determines is appropriate.

“(C) **ADJUSTMENT OF AMOUNTS.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—Based on the review conducted under subparagraph (A), the Commission shall provide for the adjustments of the following amounts:

“(I) The maximum dollar amount of qualified small dollar contributions under section 501(13)(C).

“(II) The maximum and minimum dollar amounts for qualifying contributions under section 501(12)(A).

“(III) The number and value of qualifying contributions a candidate is required to obtain under section 512(a)(1).

“(IV) The base amount for candidates under section 522(d).

“(V) The maximum amount of matching contributions a candidate may receive under section 523(b).

“(VI) The maximum amount of enhanced matching contributions a candidate may receive under section 524(c).

“(VII) The dollar amount for vouchers under section 525(c).

“(ii) **REGULATIONS.**—The Commission shall promulgate regulations providing for the adjustments made under clause (i).

“(D) **REPORT.**—Not later than March 30 following any general election for Federal office, the Commission shall submit a report to Congress on the review conducted under subparagraph (A). Such report shall contain a detailed statement of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the Commission based on such review.

“(b) **REPORTS.**—Not later than March 30, 2024, and every 2 years thereafter, the Commission shall submit to the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration a report documenting, evaluating, and making recommendations relating to the administrative implementation and enforcement of the provisions of this title.

“(c) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary to carry out the purposes of this subtitle.

SEC. 532. VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES.

“(a) **CIVIL PENALTY FOR VIOLATION OF CONTRIBUTION AND EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENTS.**—If a candidate who has been certified as a participating candidate under section 514 accepts a contribution or makes an expenditure that is prohibited under section 513, the Commission shall assess a civil pen-

alty against the candidate in an amount that is not more than 3 times the amount of the contribution or expenditure. Any amounts collected under this subsection shall be deposited into the Fund.

“(b) **REPAYMENT FOR IMPROPER USE OF FAIR ELECTIONS FUND.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—If the Commission determines that any benefit made available to a participating candidate under this title was not used as provided for in this title or that a participating candidate has violated any of the dates for remission of funds contained in this title, the Commission shall so notify the candidate and the candidate shall pay to the Fund an amount equal to—

“(A) the amount of benefits so used or not remitted, as appropriate; and

“(B) interest on any such amounts (at a rate determined by the Commission).

“(2) **OTHER ACTION NOT PRECLUDED.**—Any action by the Commission in accordance with this subsection shall not preclude enforcement proceedings by the Commission in accordance with section 309(a), including a referral by the Commission to the Attorney General in the case of an apparent knowing and willful violation of this title.”.

SEC. 102. PROHIBITION ON JOINT FUNDRAISING COMMITTEES.

Section 302(e) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (52 U.S.C. 30102(e)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6) No authorized committee of a participating candidate (as defined in section 501) may establish a joint fundraising committee with a political committee other than an authorized committee of a candidate.”.

SEC. 103. EXCEPTION TO LIMITATION ON COORDINATED EXPENDITURES BY POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEES WITH PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.

Section 315(d) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (52 U.S.C. 30116(d)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)(A), by striking “in the case of” and inserting “except as provided in paragraph (6), in the case of”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(6)(A) The limitation under paragraph (3)(A) shall not apply with respect to any expenditure from a qualified political party-participating candidate coordinated expenditure fund.

“(B) In this paragraph, the term ‘qualified political party-participating candidate coordinated expenditure fund’ means a fund established by the national committee of a political party, or a State committee of a political party, including any subordinate committee of a State committee, for purposes of making expenditures in connection with the general election campaign of a candidate for election to the office of Senator who is a participating candidate (as defined in section 501), that only accepts qualified coordinated expenditure contributions.

“(C) In this paragraph, the term ‘qualified coordinated expenditure contribution’ means, with respect to the general election campaign of a candidate for election to the office of Senator who is a participating candidate (as defined in section 501), any contribution (or series of contributions)—

“(i) which is made by an individual who is not prohibited from making a contribution under this Act; and

“(ii) the aggregate amount of which does not exceed \$500 per election.”.

TITLE II—IMPROVING VOTER INFORMATION

SEC. 201. BROADCASTS RELATING TO ALL SENATE CANDIDATES.

(a) **LOWEST UNIT CHARGE; NATIONAL COMMITTEES.**—Section 315(b)(1) of the Commu-

nications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315(b)(1)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “to such office” and inserting the following: “to such office, or by a national committee of a political party on behalf of such candidate in connection with such campaign,”; and

(2) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “for preemptible use thereof” after “station”.

(b) **PREEMPTION; AUDITS.**—Section 315 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (f) and (g), respectively and moving them to follow the existing subsection (e);

(2) by redesignating the existing subsection (e) as subsection (c); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (c) (as redesignated by paragraph (2)) the following:

“(d) **PREEMPTION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as provided in paragraph (2), and notwithstanding the requirements of subsection (b)(1)(A), a licensee shall not preempt the use of a broadcasting station by a legally qualified candidate for Senate who has purchased and paid for such use.

“(2) **CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND CONTROL OF LICENSEE.**—If a program to be broadcast by a broadcasting station is preempted because of circumstances beyond the control of the station, any candidate or party advertising spot scheduled to be broadcast during that program shall be treated in the same fashion as a comparable commercial advertising spot.

“(e) **AUDITS.**—During the 30-day period preceding a primary or primary runoff election and the 60-day period preceding a general or special election, the Commission shall conduct such audits as it deems necessary to ensure that each licensee to which this section applies is allocating television broadcast advertising time in accordance with this section and section 312.”.

(c) **REVOCATION OF LICENSE FOR FAILURE TO PERMIT ACCESS.**—Section 312(a)(7) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 312(a)(7)) is amended—

(1) by striking “or repeated”; and

(2) by inserting “or cable system” after “broadcasting station”; and

(3) by striking “his candidacy” and inserting “the candidacy of the candidate, under the same terms, conditions, and business practices as apply to the most favored advertiser of the licensee”.

(d) **TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.**—Section 315 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315) is amended—

(1) in subsection (f), as redesignated by subsection (b)(1)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “For purposes of this section—” and inserting the following: “Definitions.—For purposes of this section:”;

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by striking “the term” and inserting “BROADCASTING STATION.—The term”; and

(ii) by striking “; and” and inserting a period; and

(C) in paragraph (2), by striking “the terms” and inserting “LICENSEE; STATION LICENSEE.—The terms”; and

(2) in subsection (g), as redesignated by subsection (b)(1), by striking “The Commission” and inserting “REGULATIONS.—The Commission”.

SEC. 202. BROADCAST RATES FOR PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.

Section 315(b) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315(b)), as amended by section 201, is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “paragraph (2)” and inserting “paragraphs (2) and (3)”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) PARTICIPATING CANDIDATES.—In the case of a participating candidate (as defined in section 501 of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971), the charges made for the use of any broadcasting station for a television broadcast shall not exceed 80 percent of the lowest charge described in paragraph (1)(A) during—

“(A) the 45 days preceding the date of a primary or primary runoff election in which the candidate is opposed; and

“(B) the 60 days preceding the date of a general or special election in which the candidate is opposed.

“(4) RATE CARDS.—A licensee shall provide to a candidate for Senate a rate card that discloses—

“(A) the rate charged under this subsection; and

“(B) the method that the licensee uses to determine the rate charged under this subsection.”.

SEC. 203. FCC TO PRESCRIBE STANDARDIZED FORM FOR REPORTING CANDIDATE CAMPAIGN ADS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Communications Commission shall initiate a rulemaking proceeding to establish a standardized form to be used by each broadcasting station, as defined in section 315(f) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 315(f)) (as redesignated by section 201(b)(1)), to record and report the purchase of advertising time by or on behalf of a candidate for nomination for election, or for election, to Federal elective office.

(b) CONTENTS.—The form prescribed by the Federal Communications Commission under subsection (a) shall require a broadcasting station to report to the Federal Communications Commission and to the Federal Election Commission, at a minimum—

(1) the station call letters and mailing address;

(2) the name and telephone number of the station's sales manager (or individual with responsibility for advertising sales);

(3) the name of the candidate who purchased the advertising time, or on whose behalf the advertising time was purchased, and the Federal elective office for which he or she is a candidate;

(4) the name, mailing address, and telephone number of the person responsible for purchasing broadcast political advertising for the candidate;

(5) notation as to whether the purchase agreement for which the information is being reported is a draft or final version; and

(6) with respect to the advertisement—

(A) the date and time of the broadcast;

(B) the program in which the advertisement was broadcast; and

(C) the length of the broadcast airtime.

(c) INTERNET ACCESS.—In its rulemaking under subsection (a), the Federal Communications Commission shall require any broadcasting station required to file a report under this section that maintains an internet website to make available a link to each such report on that website.

TITLE III—RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

SEC. 301. PETITION FOR CERTIORARI.

Section 307(a)(6) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (52 U.S.C. 30107(a)(6)) is amended by inserting “(including a proceeding before the Supreme Court on certiorari)” after “appeal”.

SEC. 302. ELECTRONIC FILING OF FEC REPORTS.

Section 304(a)(11) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (52 U.S.C. 30104(a)(11)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “under this Act—” and all that follows and inserting “under this Act shall be required to main-

tain and file such designation, statement, or report in electronic form accessible by computers.”;

(2) in subparagraph (B), by striking “48 hours” and all that follows through “filed electronically)” and inserting “24 hours”; and

(3) by striking subparagraph (D).

TITLE IV—REVENUE PROVISIONS

SEC. 401. FAIR ELECTIONS FUND REVENUE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after chapter 36 the following new chapter:

“CHAPTER 37—TAX ON PAYMENTS PURSUANT TO CERTAIN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

“Sec. 4501. Imposition of tax.

“SEC. 4501. IMPOSITION OF TAX.

“(a) TAX IMPOSED.—There is hereby imposed on any payment made to a qualified person pursuant to a contract with the Government of the United States a tax equal to 0.50 percent of the amount paid.

“(b) LIMITATION.—The aggregate amount of tax imposed per contract under subsection (a) for any calendar year shall not exceed \$500,000.

“(c) QUALIFIED PERSON.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘qualified person’ means any person which—

“(1) is not a State or local government, a foreign nation, or an organization described in section 501(c)(3) which is exempt from taxation under section 501(a), and

“(2) has a contract with the Government of the United States with a value in excess of \$10,000,000.

“(d) PAYMENT OF TAX.—The tax imposed by this section shall be paid by the person receiving such payment.

“(e) USE OF REVENUE GENERATED BY TAX.—It is the sense of the Senate that amounts equivalent to the revenue generated by the tax imposed under this chapter should be appropriated for the financing of a Fair Elections Fund and used for the public financing of Senate elections.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by inserting after the item relating to chapter 36 the following:

“CHAPTER 37—TAX ON PAYMENTS PURSUANT TO CERTAIN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS”.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall apply to contracts entered into after the date of the enactment of this Act.

TITLE V—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SEC. 501. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act or amendment made by this Act, or the application of a provision or amendment to any person or circumstance, is held to be unconstitutional, the remainder of this Act and amendments made by this Act, and the application of the provisions and amendment to any person or circumstance, shall not be affected by the holding.

SEC. 502. EFFECTIVE DATE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Except as may otherwise be provided in this Act and in the amendments made by this Act, this Act and the amendments made by this Act shall apply with respect to elections occurring during 2026 or any succeeding year, without regard to whether or not the Federal Election Commission has promulgated the final regulations necessary to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act by the deadline set forth in subsection (b).

(b) DEADLINE FOR REGULATIONS.—Not later than June 30, 2024, the Federal Election Commission shall promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 283—EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF 2019 AS THE “INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE PERIODIC TABLE OF CHEMICAL ELEMENTS”

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. PETERS, and Mr. DAINES) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 283

Whereas, on December 20, 2017, the United Nations General Assembly designated 2019 as the “International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements” (referred to in this preamble as the “International Year of the Periodic Table”), recognizing that—

(1) the development of the periodic table was one of the most significant achievements in science; and

(2) the periodic table is a uniting scientific concept with broad applications and implications in astronomy, chemistry, physics, biology, and other natural sciences;

Whereas the International Year of the Periodic Table will coincide with the 150th anniversary of the development of the periodic table by Dmitri Mendeleev in 1869;

Whereas the periodic table is a unique tool enabling scientists to predict the appearance and properties of matter on Earth and in the universe;

Whereas the International Year of the Periodic Table provides an opportunity to educate the public about the ways in which chemical elements can help to address challenges relating to water, food, health, security, and energy throughout the world;

Whereas it is critical that the brightest young minds continue to be attracted to chemistry and other branches of science in order to ensure the development of the next generation of scientists, engineers, and innovators;

Whereas the American Chemical Society, founded in 1876 and chartered by Congress in 1938, is committed to—

(1) improving the lives of people through the transforming power of chemistry; and

(2) advancing the broader chemistry enterprise and the practitioners of that enterprise for the benefit of Earth and people around the world; and

Whereas the American Chemical Society and other chemical societies and associations around the world are encouraging the members of those societies and associations to work with colleagues to organize outreach activities that will instill public appreciation of—

(1) the periodic table; and

(2) the contributions of the periodic table to the betterment of life on Earth: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes and applauds the United Nations for proclaiming 2019 as the “International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements” (referred to in this resolution as the “International Year of the Periodic Table”); and

(2) commends the global community of chemists for their efforts—

(A) to advance the field of chemistry;

(B) to recognize the International Year of the Periodic Table; and

(C) to participate in events marking the International Year of the Periodic Table as—

(i) an important scientific milestone; and

(ii) a global celebration.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have 10 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 24, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the nomination of David L. Norquist, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Defense.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 24, 2019, at 10:30 a.m., to conduct a business meeting and hearing on the following nominations: Theodore Rokita, of Indiana, to be a Director of the Amtrak Board of Directors, Jennifer L. Homendy, of Virginia, and Michael Graham, of Kansas, both to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board, Carl Whitney Bentzel, of Maryland, to be a Federal Maritime Commissioner, Michael J.K. Kratsios, of South Carolina, to be an Associate Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, and Ian Paul Steff, of Indiana, to be Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Director General of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 24, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 24, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Brent James McIntosh, of Michigan, to be an Under Secretary, Brian Callanan, of New Jersey, to be General Counsel, and Brian McGuire, of New York, to be a Deputy Under Secretary, all of the Department of the Treasury, and Travis Greaves, of the District of Columbia, to be a Judge of the United States Tax Court for a term of fifteen years.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 24, 2019, at 10:15 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of

the Senate on Wednesday, July 24, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing on the following nominations: Chad F. Wolf, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Strategy, Policy, and Plans, and William Bryan, of Virginia, to be Under Secretary for Science and Technology, both of the Department of Homeland Security, Robert M. Duncan, of Kentucky, to be a Governor of the United States Postal Service, Ann C. Fisher, of the District of Columbia, and Ashley Jay Elizabeth Poling, of North Carolina, both to be a Commissioner of the Postal Regulatory Commission, Catherine Bird, of Texas, to be General Counsel of the Federal Labor Relations Authority, and Rainey R. Brandt, and Shana Frost Matini, both to be an Associate Judge of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia.

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 24, 2019, at 10 a.m., to conduct a business meeting and the nomination of E. Sequoyah Simermeyer, of Maryland, to be Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Commission.

COMMITTEE ON RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

The Committee on Rules and Administration is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 24, 2019, at 11 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 24, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA AND GLOBAL HEALTH POLICY

The Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy of the Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 24, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my fellow, Dan Becerra, have privileges of the floor for the balance of his fellowship and that Luchanna Sagoo, my intern, have privileges for the balance of the day.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my fellow, Michele Bustamante, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of this session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

MEASURE READ THE FIRST TIME—S. 2258

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I understand that there is a bill at the desk, and I ask for its first reading.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read the title of the bill for the first time.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 2258) to provide anti-retaliation protections for antitrust whistleblowers.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I now ask for a second reading, and in order to place the bill on the calendar under the provisions of rule XIV, I object to my own request.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The bill will receive a second reading on the next legislative day.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF 2019 AS THE "INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE PERIODIC TABLE OF CHEMICAL ELEMENTS"

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 283, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 283) expressing support for the designation of 2019 as the "International Year of the Periodic Table of Chemical Elements".

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 283) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 1:45 p.m. tomorrow, the Senate proceed to executive session for the consideration of Calendar No. 375; that the Senate vote on the nomination with no intervening action or debate; that if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order; that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD, the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JULY 25,
2019.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, July 25; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:33 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, July 25, 2019, at 10 a.m.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate July 24, 2019:

THE JUDICIARY

WENDY WILLIAMS BERGER, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA.

BRIAN C. BUESCHER, OF NEBRASKA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF NEBRASKA.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

STEPHEN M. DICKSON, OF GEORGIA, TO BE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION FOR THE TERM OF FIVE YEARS.